

SPORTS REVIEW

Wrestling

1980 ANNUAL

After Stopping The Zbyszko Monster
**DOES BRUNO WANT
BACKLUND NEXT?**



**ASSLIN'
DOWN IN DIXIE:
SOUTHERN-FRIED
HAYHEM**

**POTLIGHT
ON KEN
MATERA**

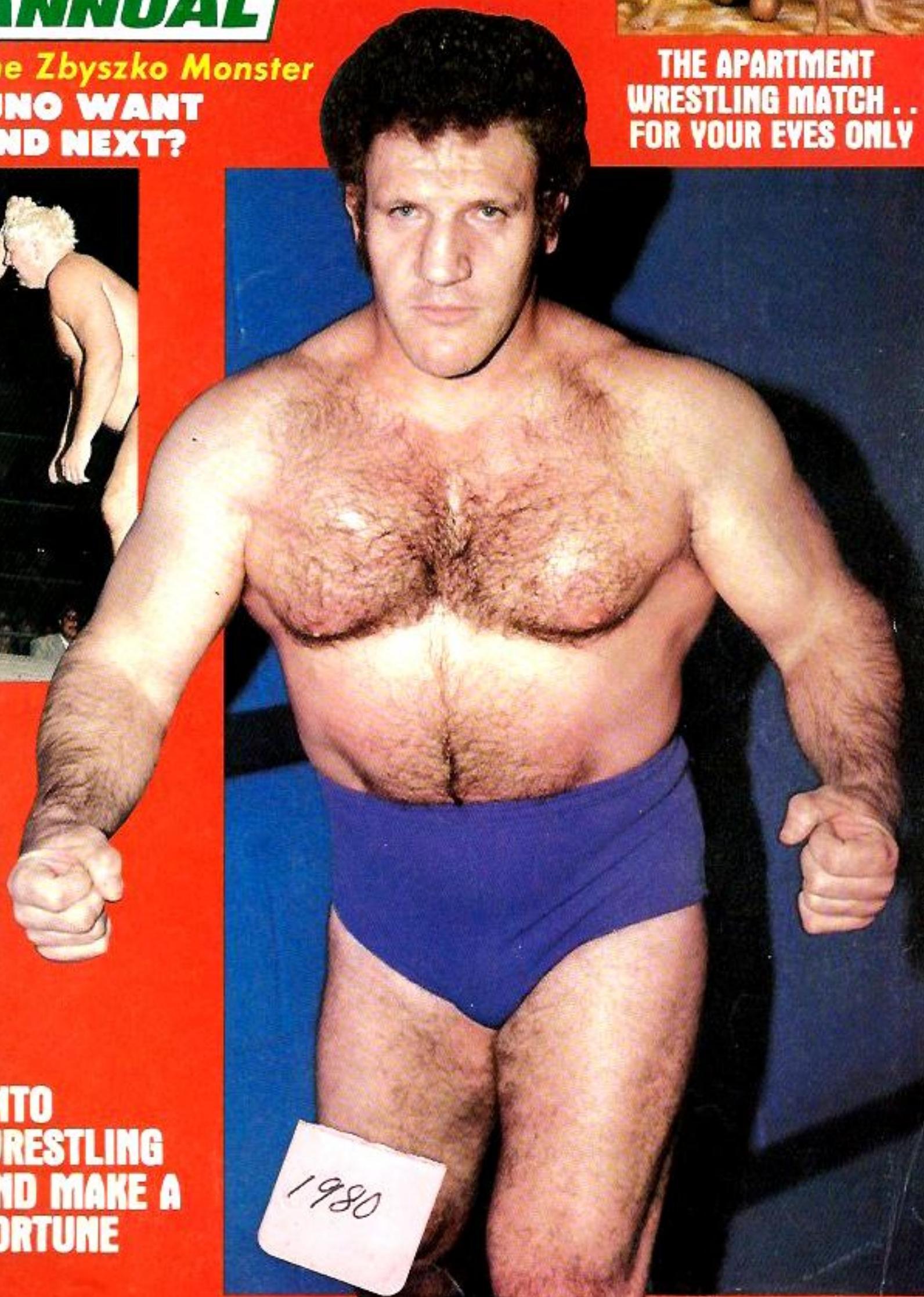
Top Stars Reveal:
**HOW TO BREAK INTO
PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING
AND MAKE A
FORTUNE**

WINTER 1980

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**THE APARTMENT
WRESTLING MATCH . .
FOR YOUR EYES ONLY**



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OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

- Champion—BOB BACKLUND
1—HULK HOGAN
2—LARRY ZBYSZKO
3—KEN PATERA
4—PAT PATTERSON
5—IVAN PUTSKI
6—PEDRO MORALES
7—TONY ATLAS
8—THE HANGMAN
9—RICK MARTEL
10—TOR KAMATA

AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

- Champion: VERNE GAGNE
1—NICK BOCKWINKEL
2—CRUSHER BLACKWELL
3—CRUSHER
4—MAD DOG VACHON
5—DINO BRAVO
6—JESSE VENTURA
7—TITO SANTANA
8—GREG GAGNE
9—ADRIAN ADONIS
10—SUPER DESTROYER II

MOST POPULAR

- 1—ANDRE THE GIANT
2—BRUNO SAMMARTINO
3—DUSTY RHODES
4—RIC FLAIR
5—BOB BACKLUND
6—MR. WRESTLING II
7—IVAN PUTSKI
8—MIL MASCARAS
9—RICK STEAMBOAT
10—TED DiBIASE



BOB BACKLUND



HARLEY RACE



VERNE GAGNE



IVAN PUTSKI

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

- Champion—HARLEY RACE
1—GREG VALENTINE
2—DUSTY RHODES
3—BARON VON RASCHKE
4—TED DiBIASE
5—HUSSEIN ARAB
6—KEN PATERA
7—DICK SLATER
8—MR. WRESTLING II
9—KEVIN VON ERICH
10—EL HALCON

TAG TEAMS

- 1—PEDRO MORALES & BOB BACKLUND
2—RAY STEVENS & JIMMY SNUKA
3—JESSE VENTURA & ADRIAN ADONIS
4—THE ASSASSINS
5—IVAN KOLOFF & NIKOLAI VOLKOFF
6—TERRY GORDY & BUDDY ROBERTS
7—JACK & JERRY BRISCO
8—THE SAMOANS
9—DAVID & KEVIN VON ERICH
10—VERNE GAGNE & MAD DOG VACHON

MOST HATED

- 1—LARRY ZBYSZKO
2—BARON VON RASCHKE
3—KEN PATERA
4—HULK HOGAN
5—MARK LEWIN
6—NICK BOCKWINKEL
7—GREG VALENTINE
8—HARLEY RACE
9—KILLER BROOKS
10—MICHAEL HAYES

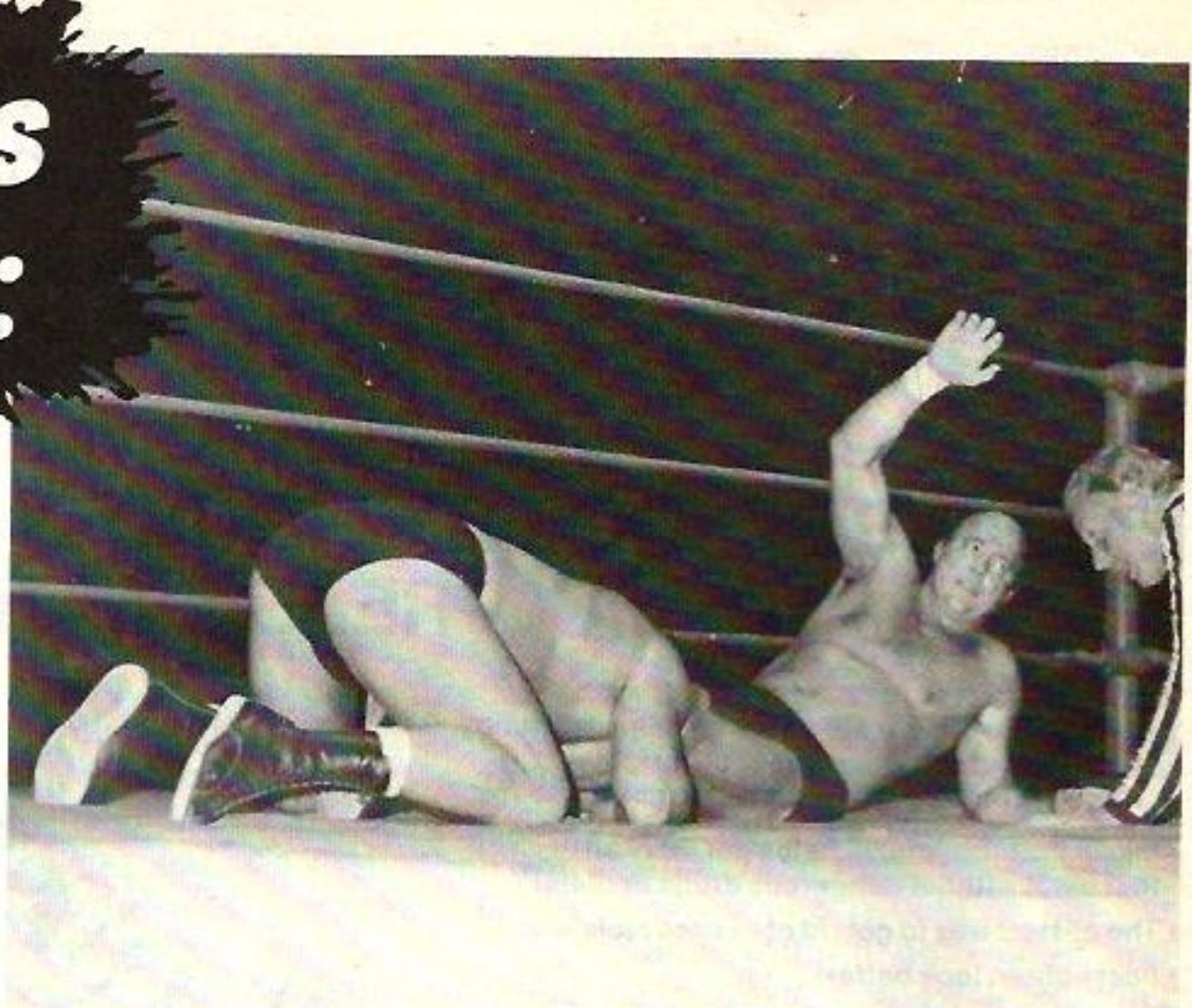
Top Stars Reveal:

HOW TO BREAK INTO PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING AND MAKE A FORTUNE

Each day hundreds of letters come pouring into our offices asking the same question, "How can I become a professional wrestler?" Fans, your wish has now come true. Here are wrestling's top stars telling you how you can break into wrestling and earn top dollar

THE FIVE MEN sat in wary silence around the large rectangular table. It was obvious that tensions would only increase as the day progressed

and hostility might reach the violent stage. We felt there was no alternative, that the gain would be greater than the risks. That's why we invited five such



"There are various wrestling camps around the country where youngsters can go to improve their skills!"
—Verne Gagne



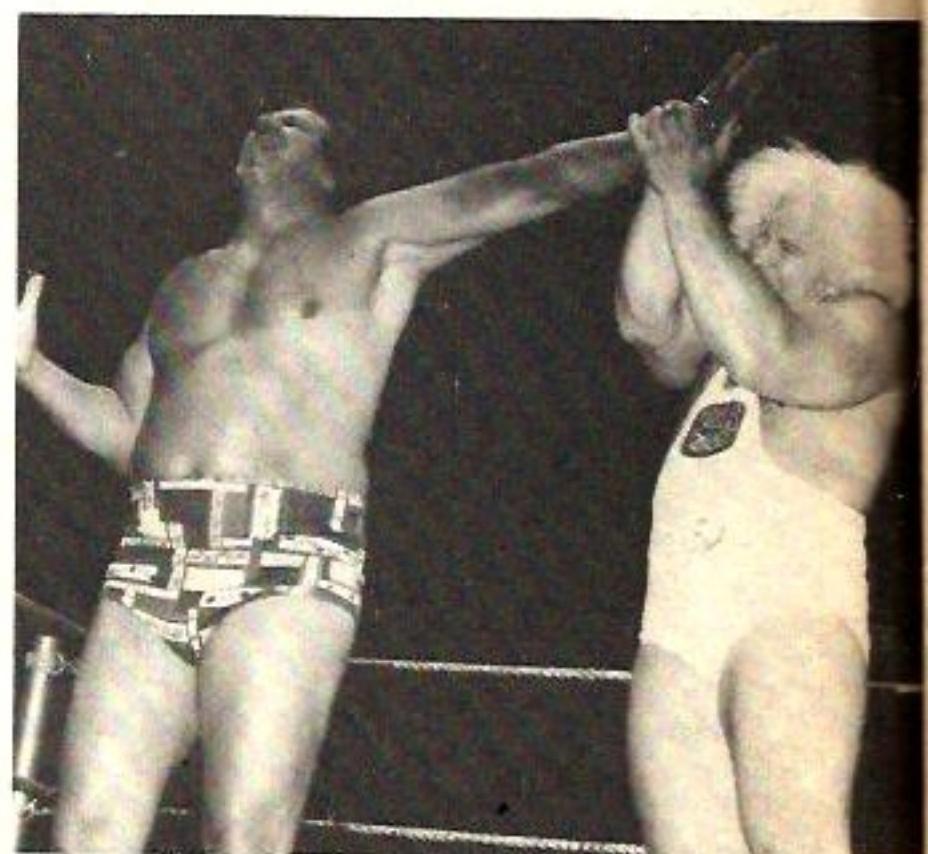
dissimilar men to sit in our offices.

Before you call us crazy, let us tell you the reason we asked Dusty Rhodes, Superstar Billy Graham, Greg Valentine, Lou Albano, and Verne Gagne to the same place at the same time. Or

(Continued on page 54)



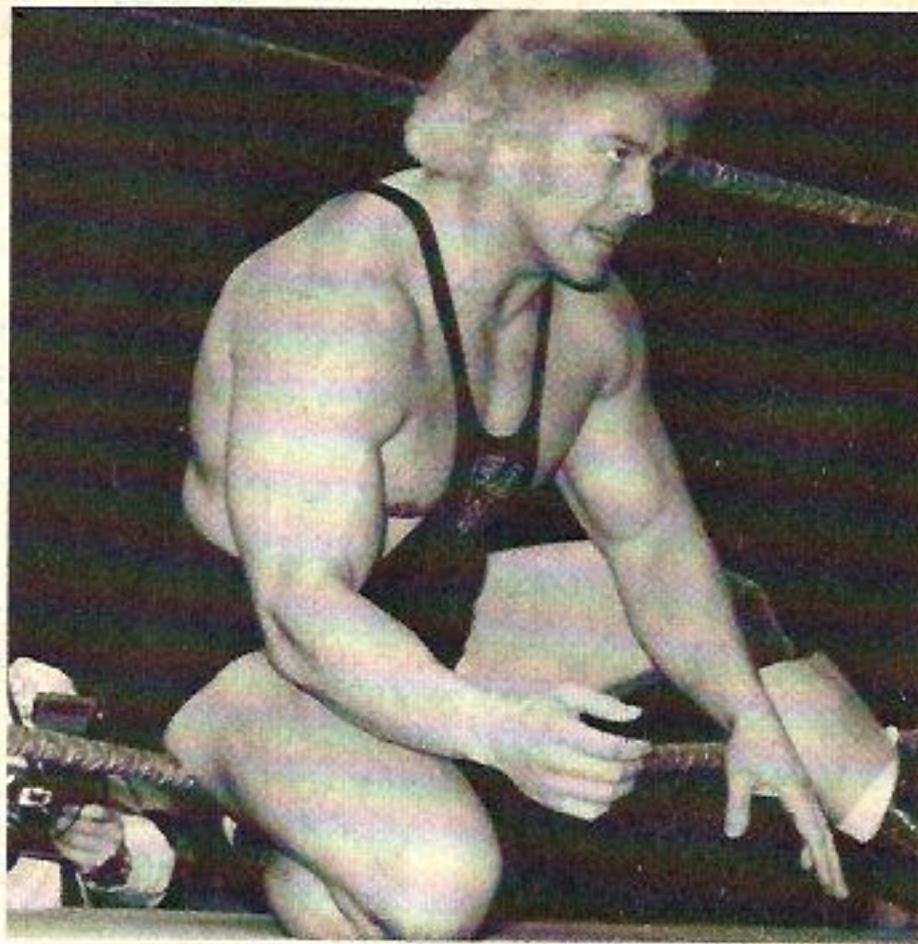
SPOTLIGHT ON **KEN PATERA**



Ken Patera is one of the few men in the sport who can match Bruno Sammartino's strength. Ken kneedrops Bruno (top). Patera kneelifts Bob Backlund in an unsuccessful attempt to capture the WWF championship (left). Patera brings a cry of pain from Jay Strongbow as he twists the Chief's wrist (above).



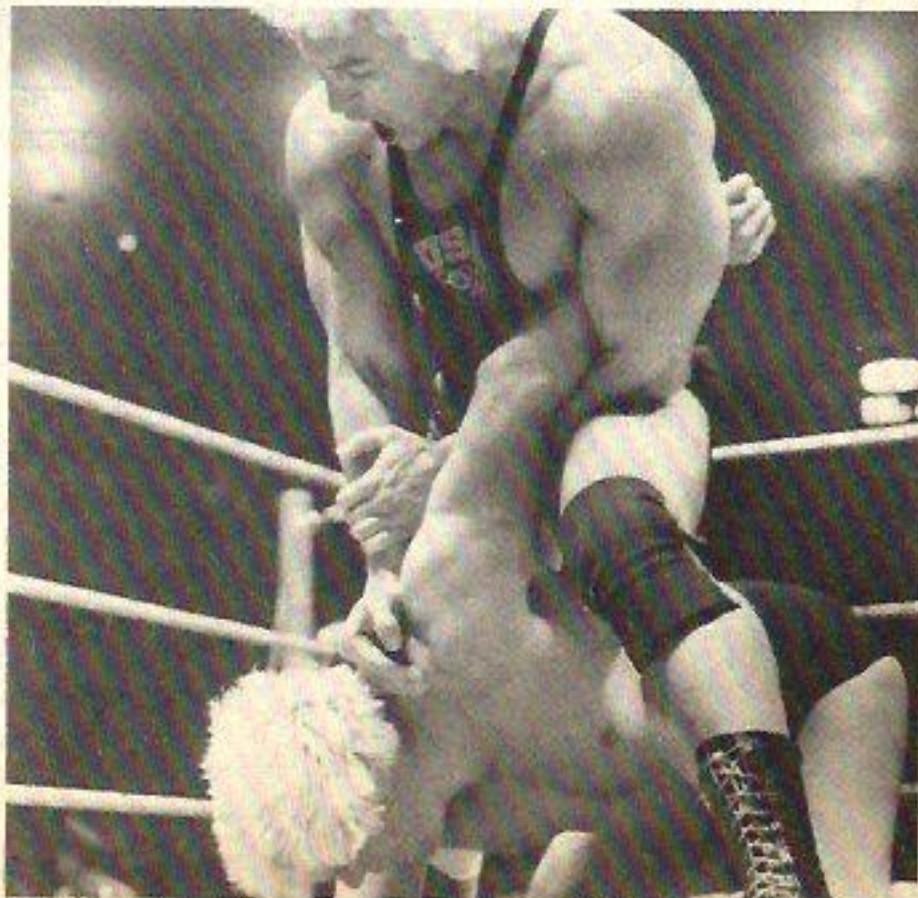
Patera uses the top rope to choke Tony Atlas (left). Ken glares across the ring, preparing for an attack (below). An angered Patera is a difficult man to handle.



Few wrestlers stir controversy in the manner of Ken Patera. A man with infinite ability, Patera elected to devote himself to the single-minded pursuit of victory, no matter the methods. In this pictorial essay, Ken Patera's brilliant, triumphant career is examined



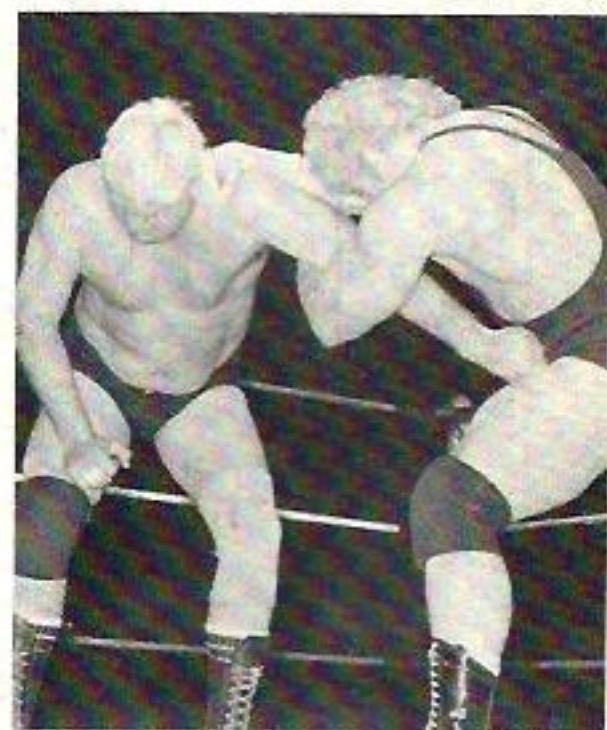
Patera will stop at nothing to retain his cherished Inter-Continental title. Ken smashes a chair over the head of Pat Patterson (left) and applies a figure-four armlock on the former champion (below).



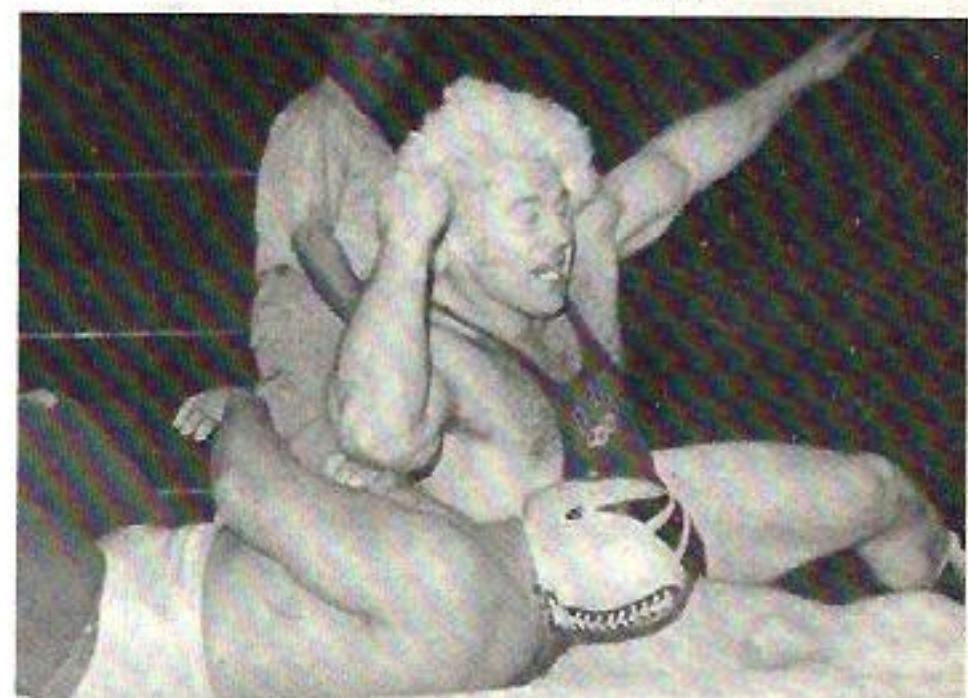
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KEN PATERA

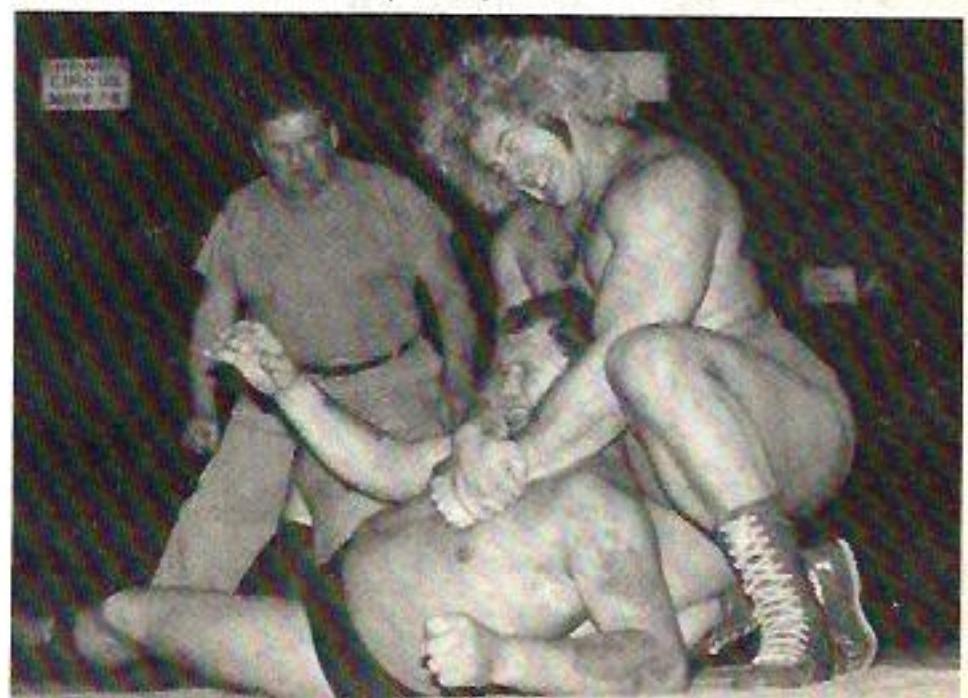
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Ken finished third in CBS-TV's World's Strongest Man competition (left). Dick Murdoch looks for an escape from a Patera armlock (above).



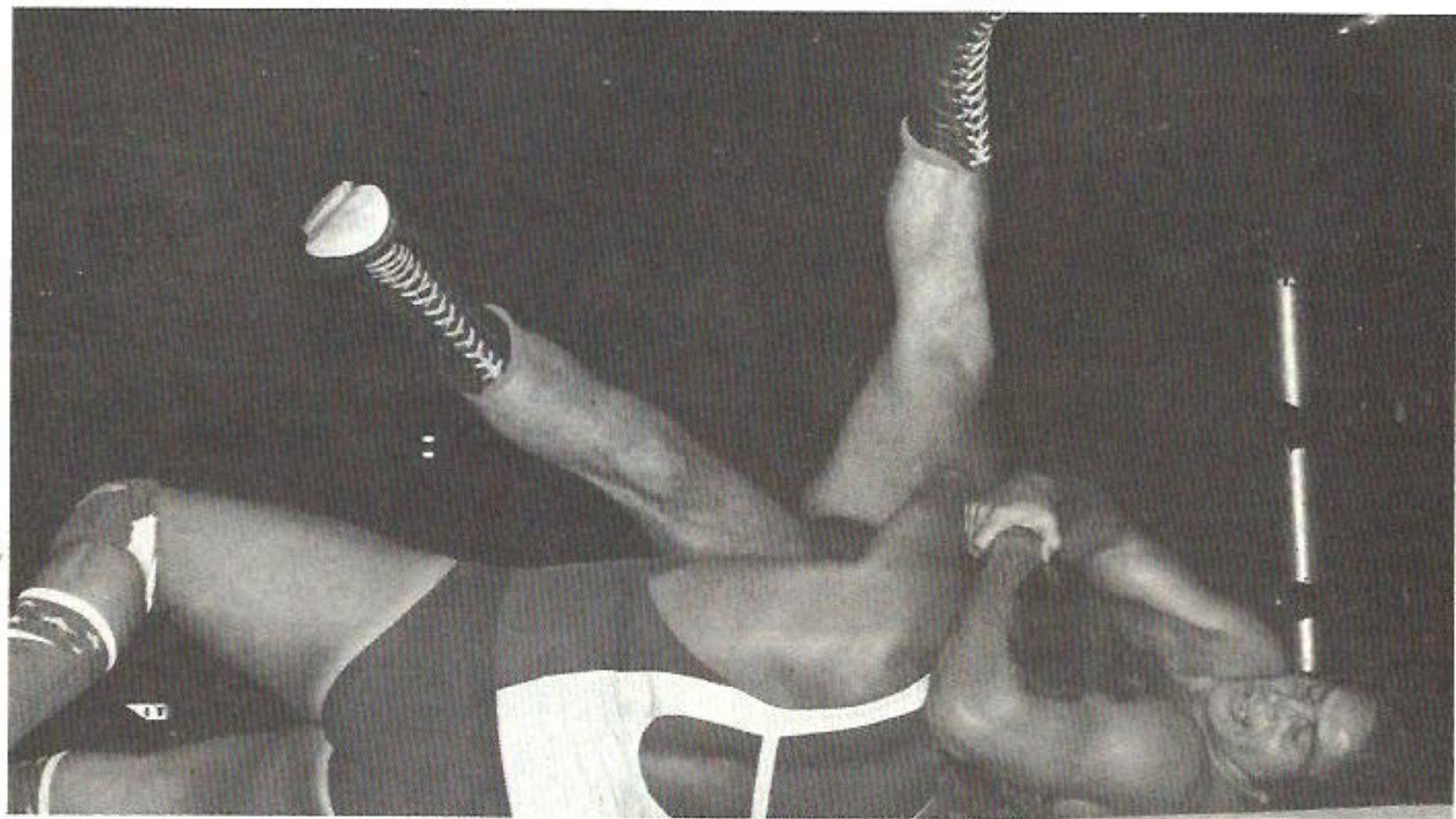
Patera was disqualified for his brutal assault on Chief Jay Strongbow (left). Mil Mascaras has his hand crushed by a Patera elbows smash (above). Patera puts his considerable strength into a chinlock on Harley Race (below).



(Continued on page 64)



"HOW PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING BECAME MY LIFE"



BY BOB ROOP

I BEGAN AN amateur career when I was in the fourth grade in school! The wrestling course was offered to any kids who wanted to try it. I'm a guy who likes individual competition. I do now and I did then. It's just you against somebody else. That's my thing.

I played some college football at Michigan State and did some wrestling there. I also wrestled in

the service. After that I had more amateur experience at the University of Southern Illinois.

I loved wrestling so much that I inquired about getting on the U.S. Olympic team. I tried out and because of all the years of wrestling I now had behind me, I made it.

At about the same time as the Olympics, I met Lou Thesz. He'd seen me wrestle and asked me if I wanted to turn pro. I was real anxious but first I wanted to fulfill a

Bob Roop has won fortune and fame wrestling the greatest mat stars in the country. He has even challenged Jack Brisco for the N.W.A. championship (above), the highest goal to which a wrestler can aspire. Bob is lucky to be blessed by having great skill and cunning, it took much more than that, though, for him to become a heavyweight wrestling star!

I BROKE INTO PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING!"

Our office is constantly flooded with letters asking how to become a professional grappler. We decided the only ones who really know are the professional wrestlers themselves. Therefore, each month a different wrestler will describe the trials and tribulations endured on the path to wrestling stardom

dream by entering the National A.A.U. Greco-Roman championships. So I turned Lou's offer down.

The A.A.U. competition was in Detroit, Michigan. I was doing real well. After one of my matches I was approached by one of the spectators. His name was Eddie Graham.

After introducing himself, we sat down and talked. Eddie told me he thought I had the makings of a pro. He gave me his telephone number and said if I wanted to turn pro, I should give him a call.

I called Eddie Graham a few weeks later and it was with his help

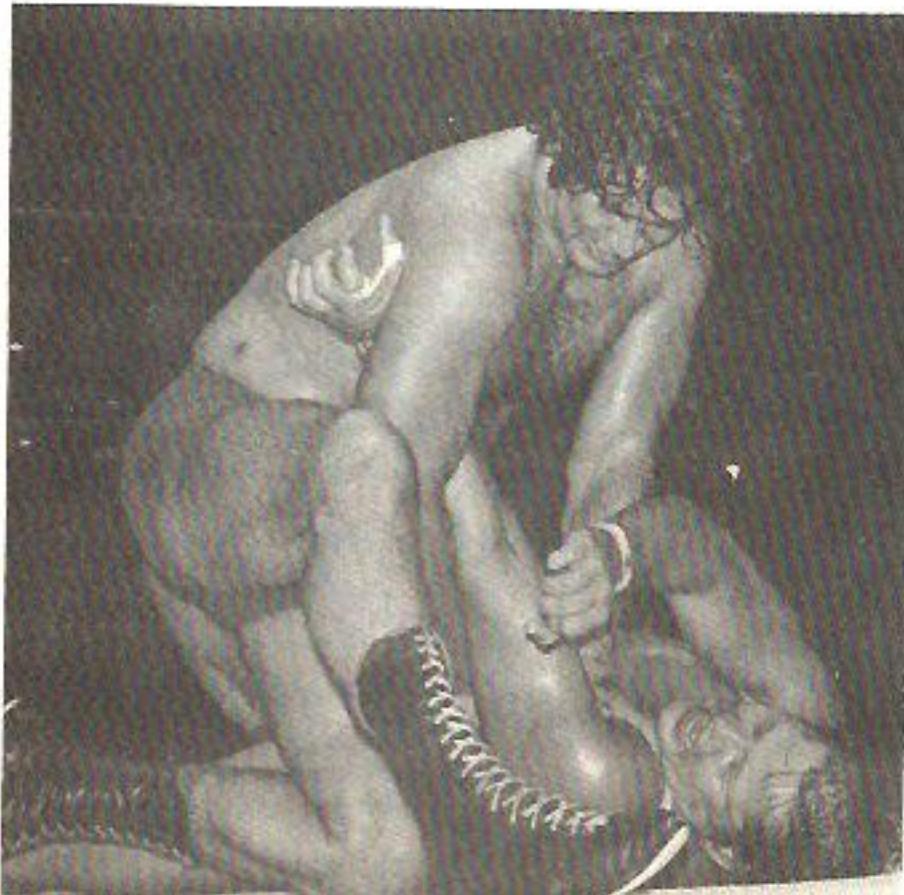
I got started. Graham worked me real hard at the beginning. I ran five miles every day, lifted weights to improve my power, and wrestled at the gym four or five nights a week.

Finally the big test came. I was to wrestle Dick Dunn in Ft. Meyers, Florida. I don't mind telling you I was a nervous wreck before that battle.

The match worked out fine for me and I was on my way to what I hoped would be a profitable career. Graham was proud of me and I was glad I didn't disappoint him.

The most important advice I can give to someone who wants to become a pro is this: You must have

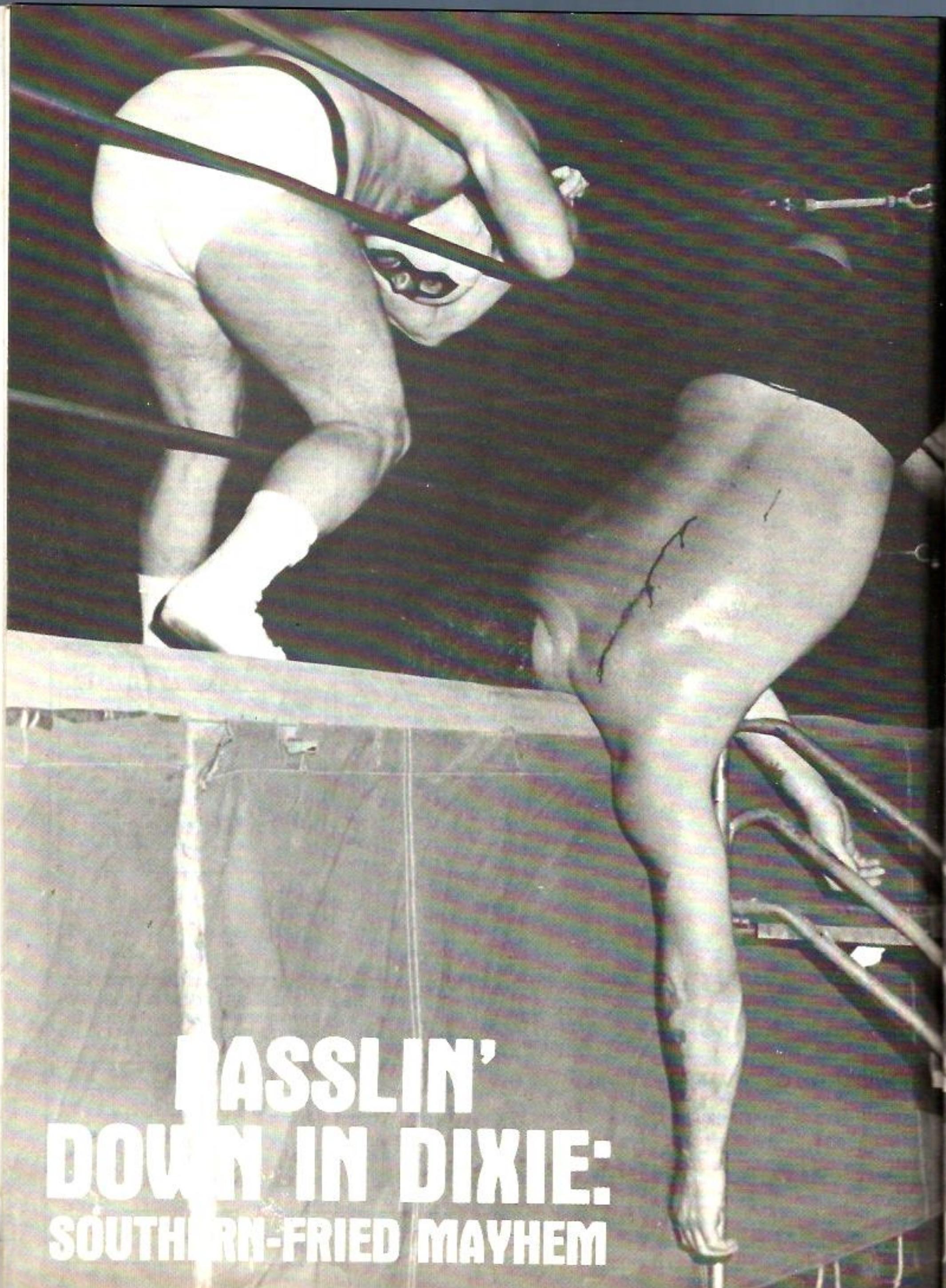
Against Jack Brisco, Bob has a rough time of it (left). He had a much more difficult time of it working himself up to a championship challenge. A kick in the belly from a man like Bull Ramos (right) doesn't compare to the torment an athlete like Bob endures as he trains for his matches!



an amateur background. Without that amateur background, you're going nowhere. Most wrestlers have had college wrestling experience. And it's paid off for them.

Keeping yourself in tip-top shape at all times is another important feature you must possess. Letting yourself get out of shape will lead to an early downfall.

As far as I'm concerned I still have a long way to go in my career. I want the world title. And because of my background, I think I'll win it one of these days. All that hard work will pay off when that belt is around my waist! □



BASSLIN' DOUTIN DIXIE: SOUTHERN-FRIED MAYHEM



Great wrestlers and bloody rivals blanket the Southern wrestling arenas. New Orleans, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Texas, and the Mid-Atlantic area brim with terrific grappling action.

In this special section, we give a pictorial and written report on the superstars delighting fans throughout the South

EXCITING WRESTLING CUTS across the entire South like Sherman's march. From the Mid-Atlantic area out to Texas, great men tackle great ambitions in great matches.

Our top-flight correspondents filed individual reports on the men making the important news in each of their areas.

In the Mid-Atlantic area, the Ric Flair-Greg Valentine feud intensifies. Rick Steamboat and Jay Youngblood seek return of their NWA tag team titles from champions Jimmy Snuka and Ray Stevens, while Paul Jones returns, contending he is reformed and sorry for his earlier dastardly behavior.

Georgia wrestling is highlighted by the Anderson Brothers' bloody family feud. Also, Mr. Wrestling II seeks to turn back the evil assaults of Masked Superstar.

The powerful tag team of Nikolai Volkoff and Ivan Koloff continue its frightening attack on all that is decent, under the guidance of Sir Oliver Humperdink. Standing ready to repel those advances are the likes of Dusty Rhodes and Bugsy McGraw.

Courageous men like Junkyard Dog and Ray Candy delight all New Orleans grappling fans. Additionally, Ken Mantell and Paul Orndorff continue their seething rivalry.

Tennessee mat fans watch with growing interest as Jerry Lawler and Jimmy Valiant battle for the hearts and souls of the westling arenas.

And out Texas way, the Von Erichs, Mil Mascaras, and other greats stand firm against the savage attacks of Killer Brooks, Stan Stasiak, Killer Karl Kox, and other evil men.

TEXAS

By Virginia W. Sloan

No story about Texas wrestling could begin without a word on wrestling's biggest and most popular family, the Von Erichs. David, Kevin, and Kerry continue to grow in stature and wrestling ability, never running from a fight, whether the opponent is fair or dirty. They know they have something to prove, and they're proving it to all fans in a big way.

The man of a thousand masks, Mil Mascaras, has made quite an impact in the Lone Star state. Mascaras is simply one of the all-time great wrestlers and not enough good words can be said about this man.

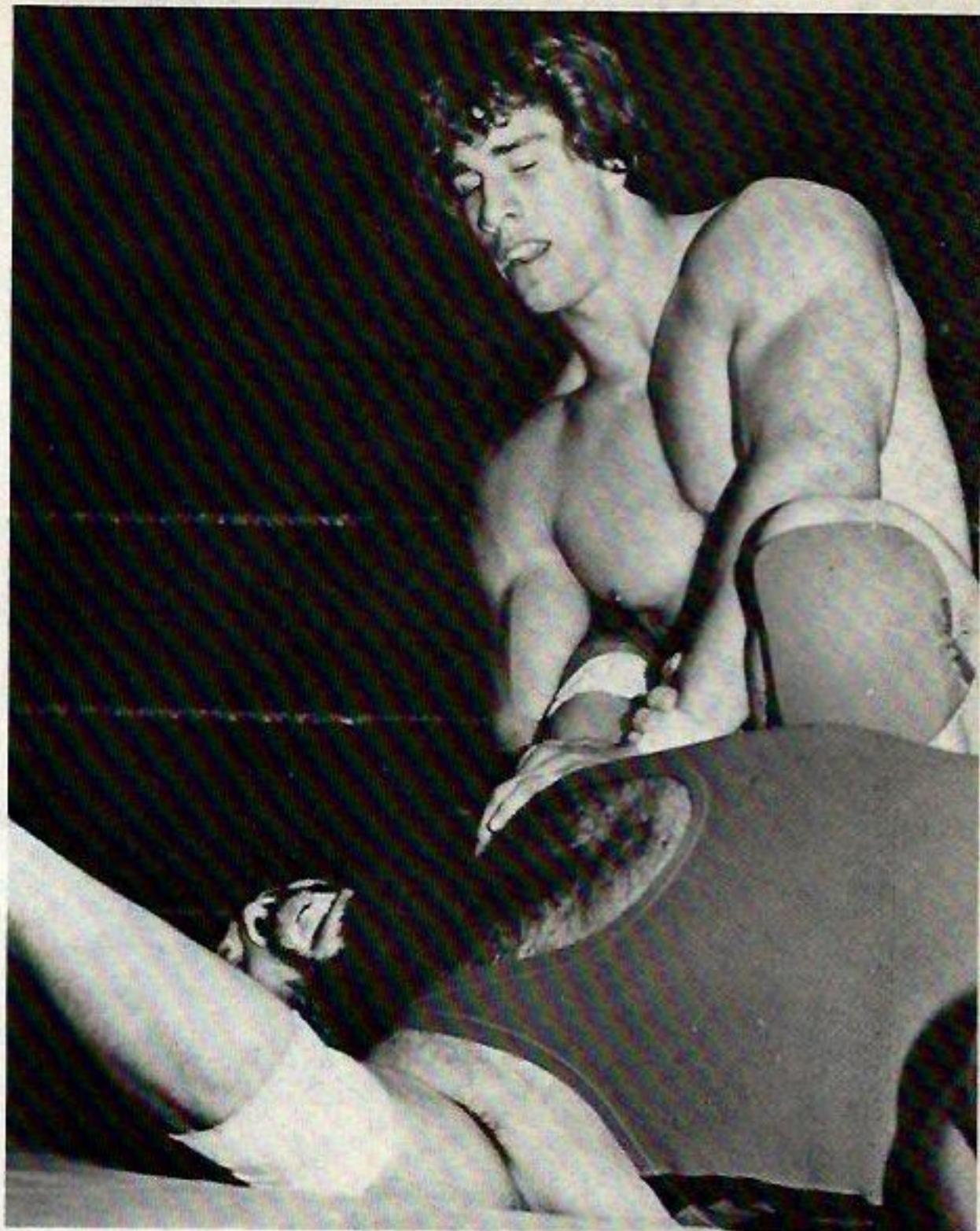
Stan Stasiak moved down from the Pacific Northwest, won the Texas Brass Knuckles championship, and has defended it with violent vigor.

Jose Lothario and Gino Hernandez have a hot feud brewing, as do Lothario and Stasiak. A couple of notorious rulebreakers, Pak Song and Killer Karl Kox, disgrace their sport.

Bruiser Brodie is a fine example of a man seeing the error of his past and reverting to a tamer style of brawling. Killer Brooks is another top-ranked wrestler.

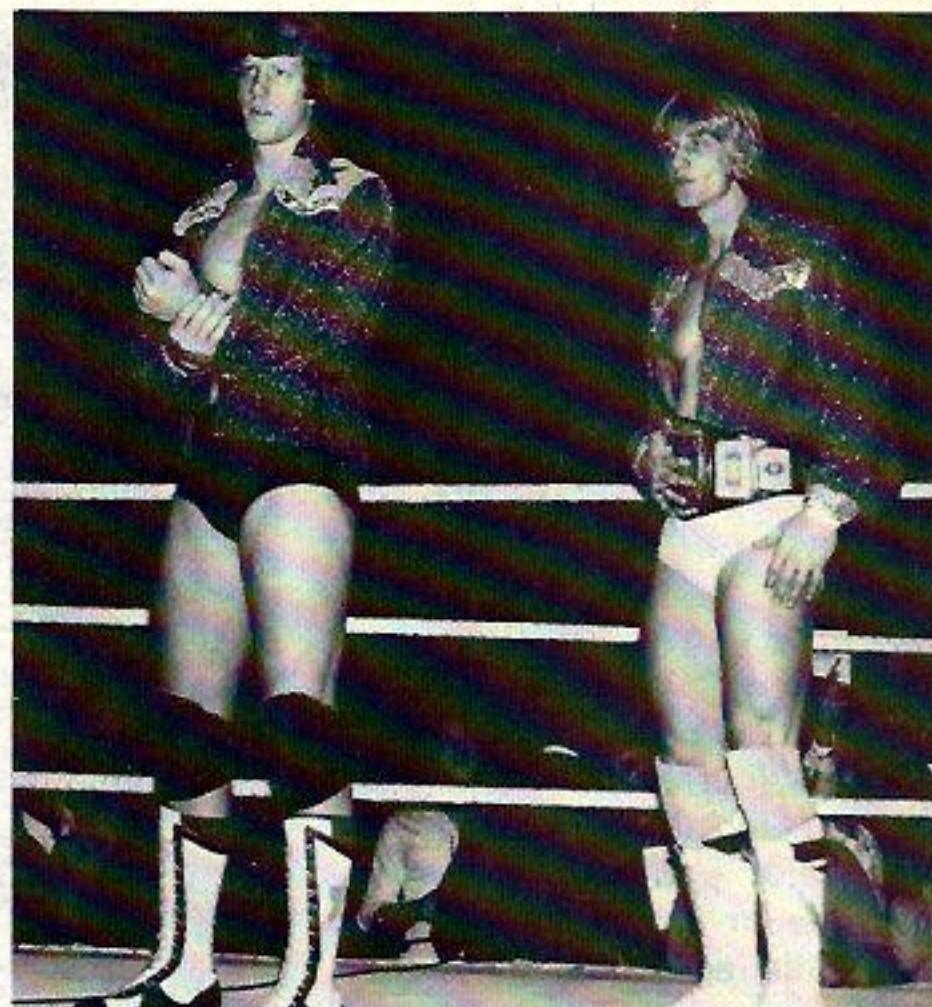
Both Tony Atlas and Sweet Brown Sugar delight fans with their aerial maneuvers. El Halcon is the reigning American Heavyweight champion, and NWA champ Harley Race occasionally defends his title in the state.

As for managers, few compare with Gary Hart and J.J. Dillon.

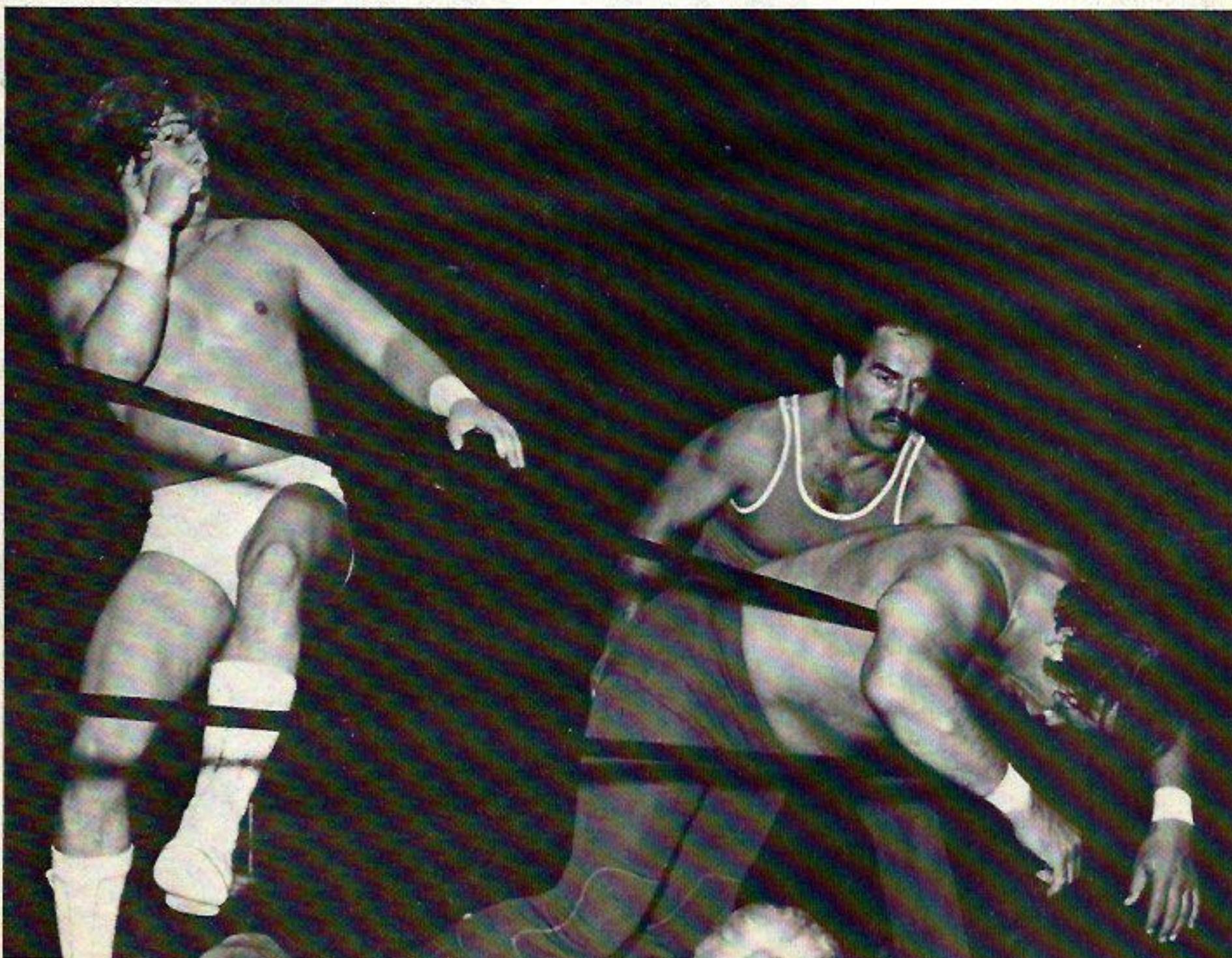


Texas is a tough place for a rulebreaker to make a living. And the Von Erichs make it that way. The three brothers travel throughout the world, but always return to make sure their home base remains pure. Kerry, the youngest of the brothers, applies an armlock (above). Brass Knuckles champion Stan Stasiak enjoys his work (below).





The well-respected Jose Lothario has no tolerance for men like Gary Hart (above left). David and Kerry Von Erich stare across the ring at their opponents (above right). Referee Nick Kozak looks on as Gino Hernandez pummels Lothario (below).



TENNESSEE

By Randy Swift

It's difficult to focus on one particular grappler with the wealth of wrestling talent entertaining Tennessee fans. To start, one must discuss Jimmy Valiant. Brash, outspoken, and truly unique, Valiant breathes controversy into every arena he enters.

Jerry Lawler, the self-proclaimed King of Memphis, is another very talented man. Lawler (currently recuperating from a leg injury) doesn't take guff and promises to wrestle anyone in any place, any time once his leg is healed.

Two young men from Georgia, Tommy Rich and Austin Idol, are exciting fans in the same manner they did Georgia grappling fans.

Another big fan favorite is British-born Billy Robinson. Always decent and fair, Robinson can lose his temper when he believes his foe is trying to take advantage.

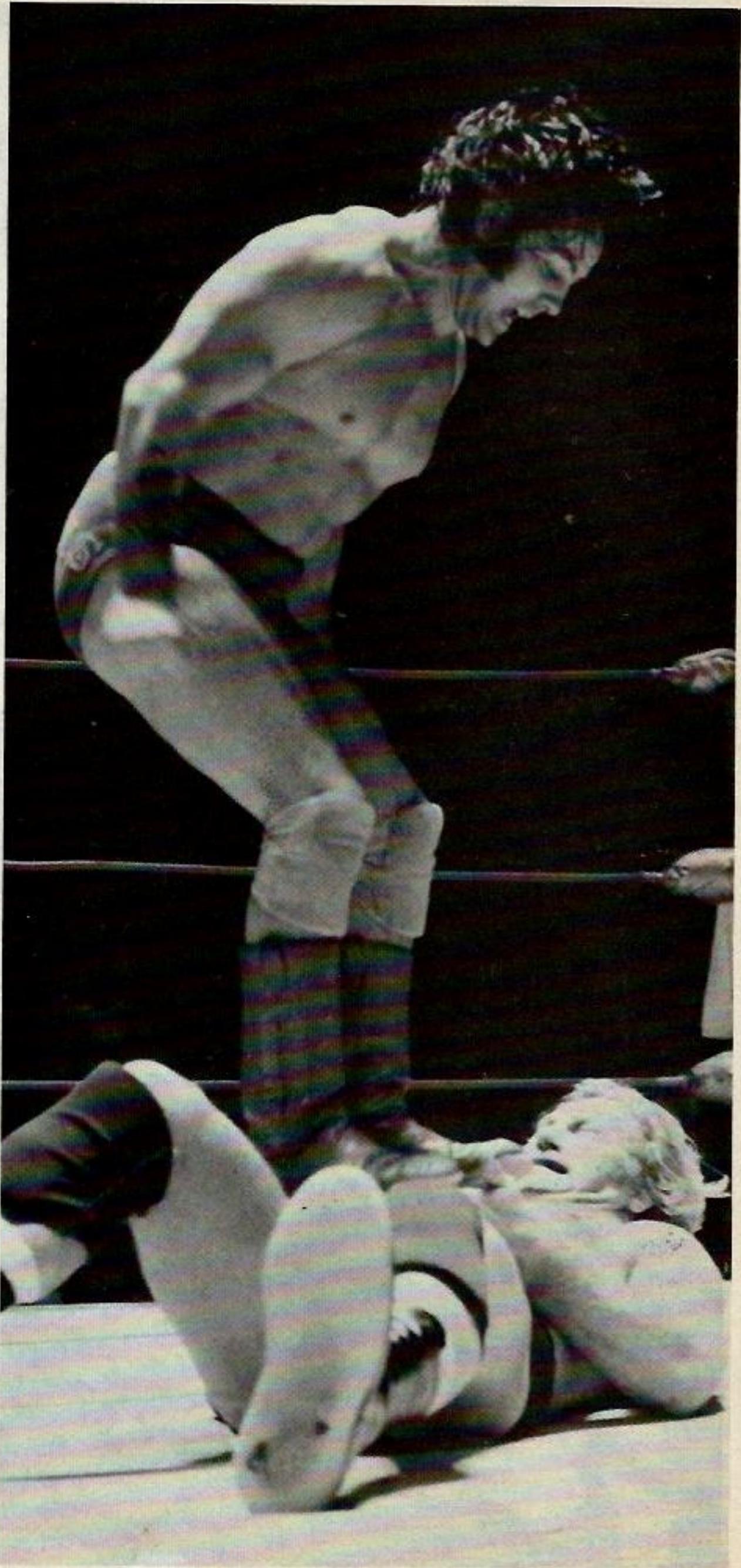
A young man with a lot of guts and skill is Eddie Gilbert. Many ringside observers tout Gilbert as a coming superstar.

Two real baddies are Sonny King and Killer Krupp. Both express utter disdain for the fans and the health and well-being of their opponents.

Bill Dundee is always an exciting wrestler to watch, as is Ken Lucas. Dr. Bill Irwin, whose specialty is pain, shows much evil promise.

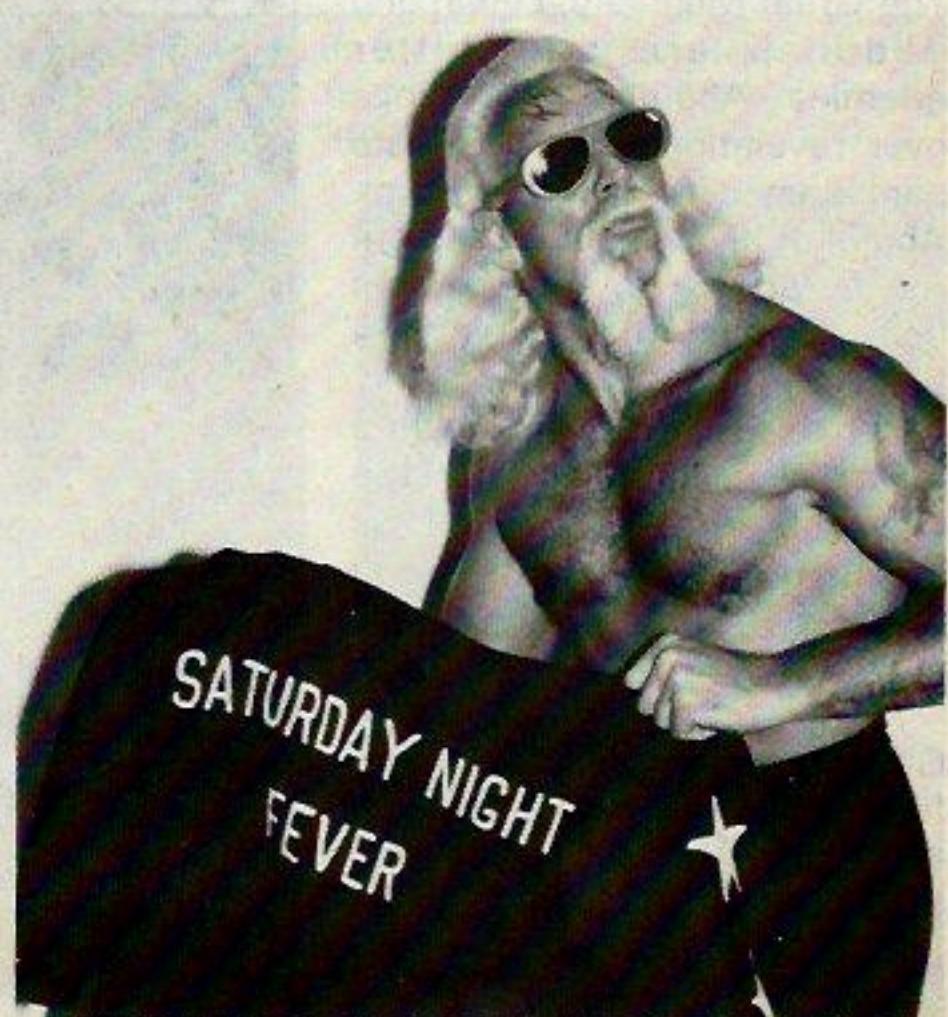
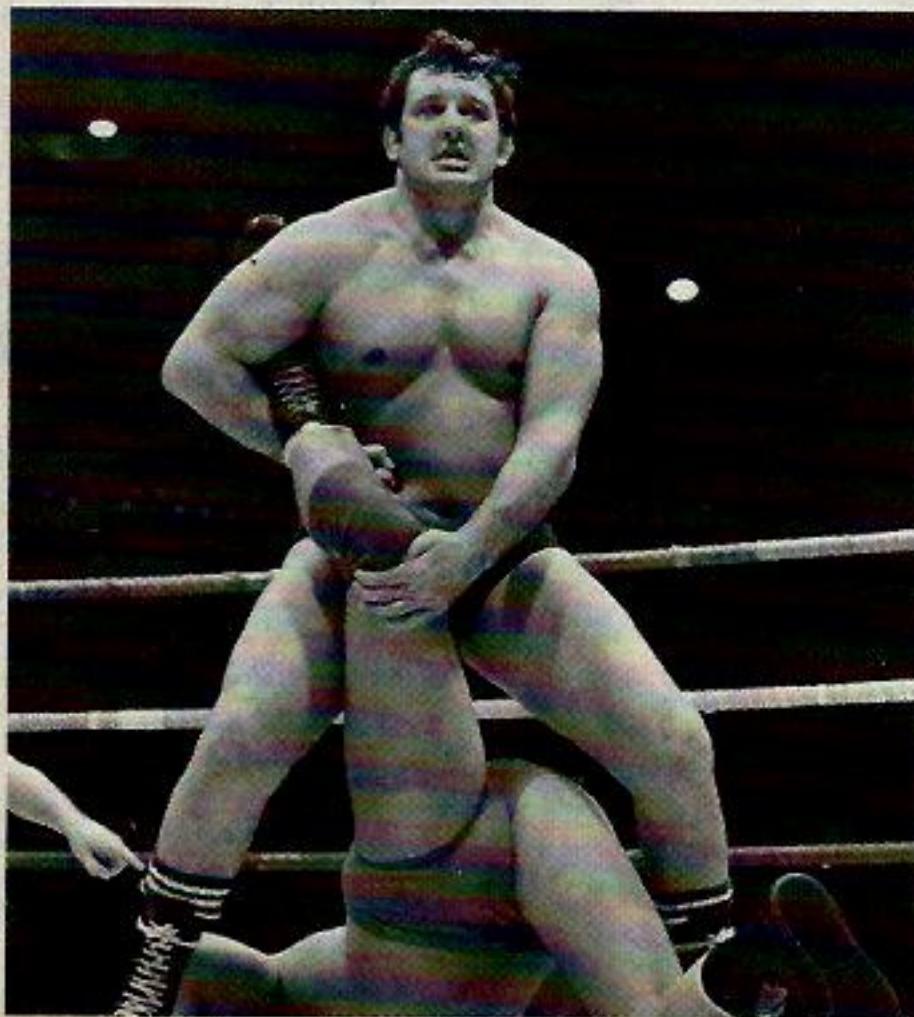
And of course, there's always The Manchurians, a fiendish tag team bent on mutilation and mass destruction.

One of Tennessee's most popular stars, Bill Dundee, leaps upon Nick Bockwinkel's midsection. Bockwinkel, who recently lost his AWA title after a five-year reign, makes frequent appearances in the area.





A fan wishes Jerry Lawler a speedy recovery from his leg injury (above). Tennessee rulebreakers are learning about Billy Robinson's temper (below left). All Tennessee has caught Jimmy Valiant Fever (below right).



GEORGIA

By B.W. Foreman

Sparking the hotbed of Georgia wrestling is the illustrious Mr. Wrestling II. As always, II defends wrestling's honor and the fans' faith with dignity and grace. Currently, II must grapple with the persistent invasion of Masked Superstar, who has selected II as his principal target.

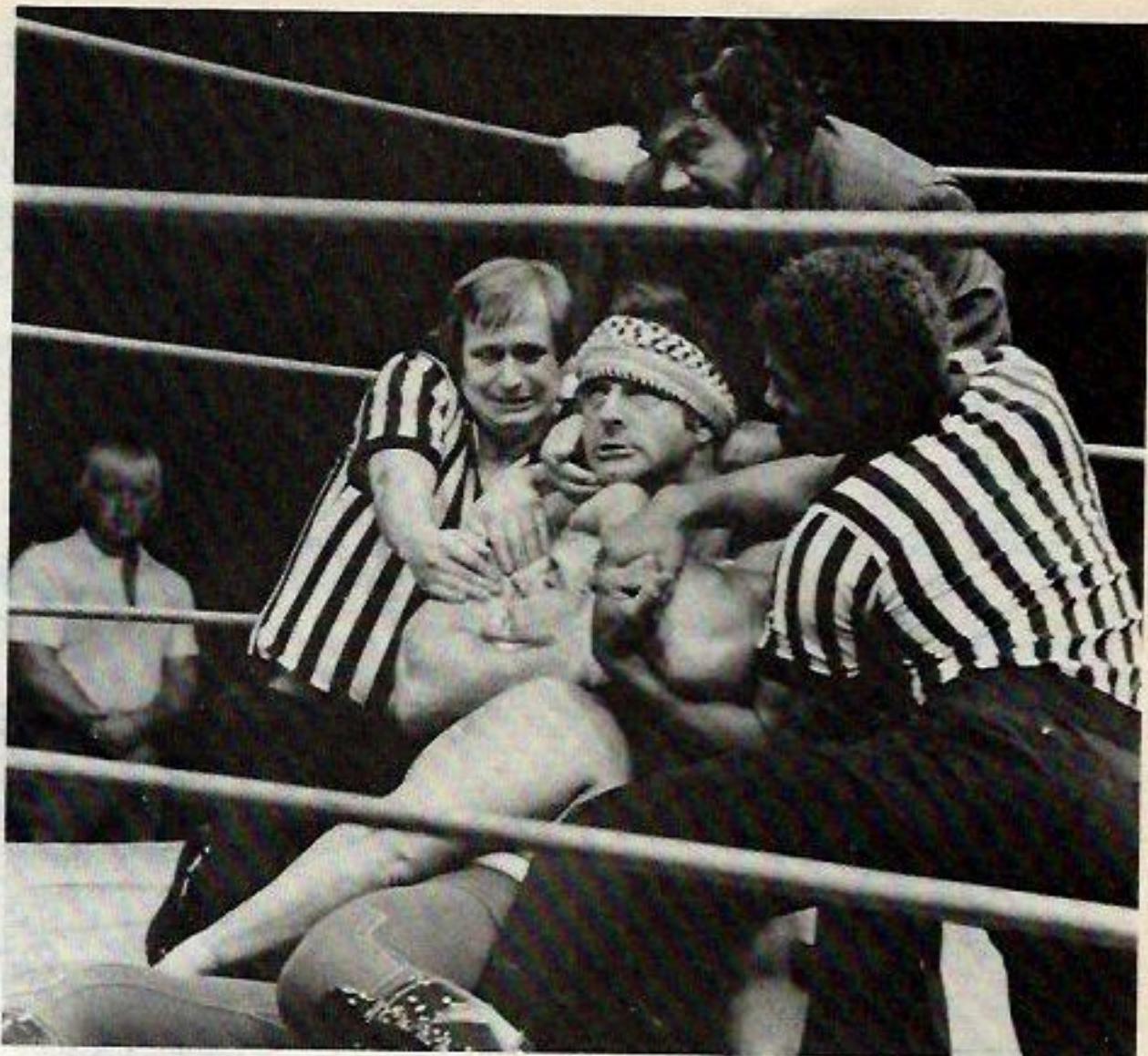
Sadly, the Georgia Heavyweight title is still held by Baron Von Raschke, an evil man bent on bullying smaller foes and quick to resort to rulebreaking tactics at the slightest hint of defeat.

Bad guys Ole and Gene Anderson maintain a sickening feud with brother Lars in the worst incidence of brotherly hatred since the outbreak of the Civil War. Dusty Rhodes comes into Georgia from time to time to help Lars against The Dream's old nemesis, Ole.

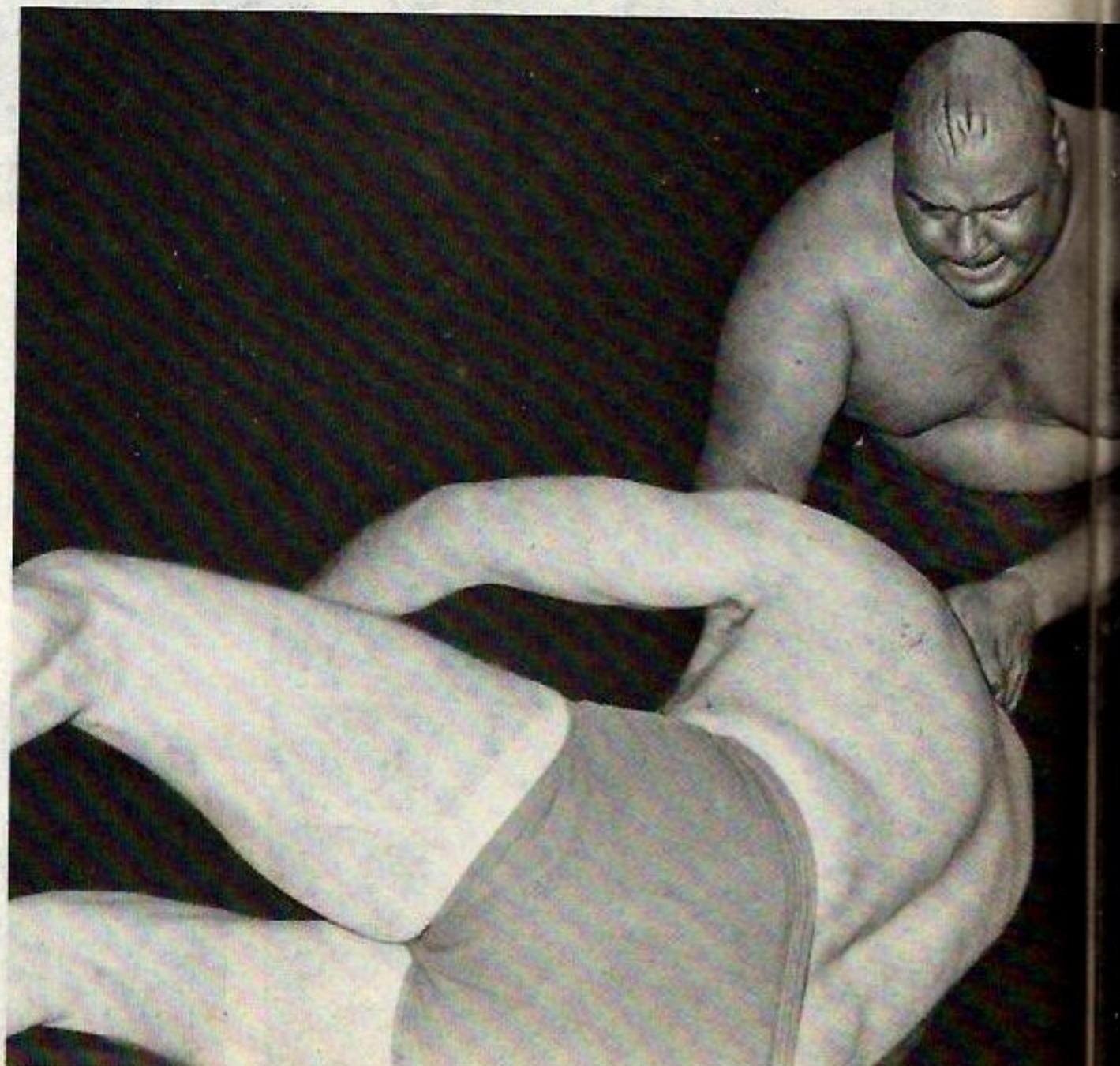
One of the more bewildering feuds centers around Mark Lewin and Abdullah the Butcher. Once best of friends under the managerial hand of The Great Mephisto, Lewin and Abdullah are now bitter enemies. Abdullah still stings over revelations that Mephisto paid Lewin more than him. Abdullah has vowed to take out the difference in money from both Lewin and Mephisto's hides.

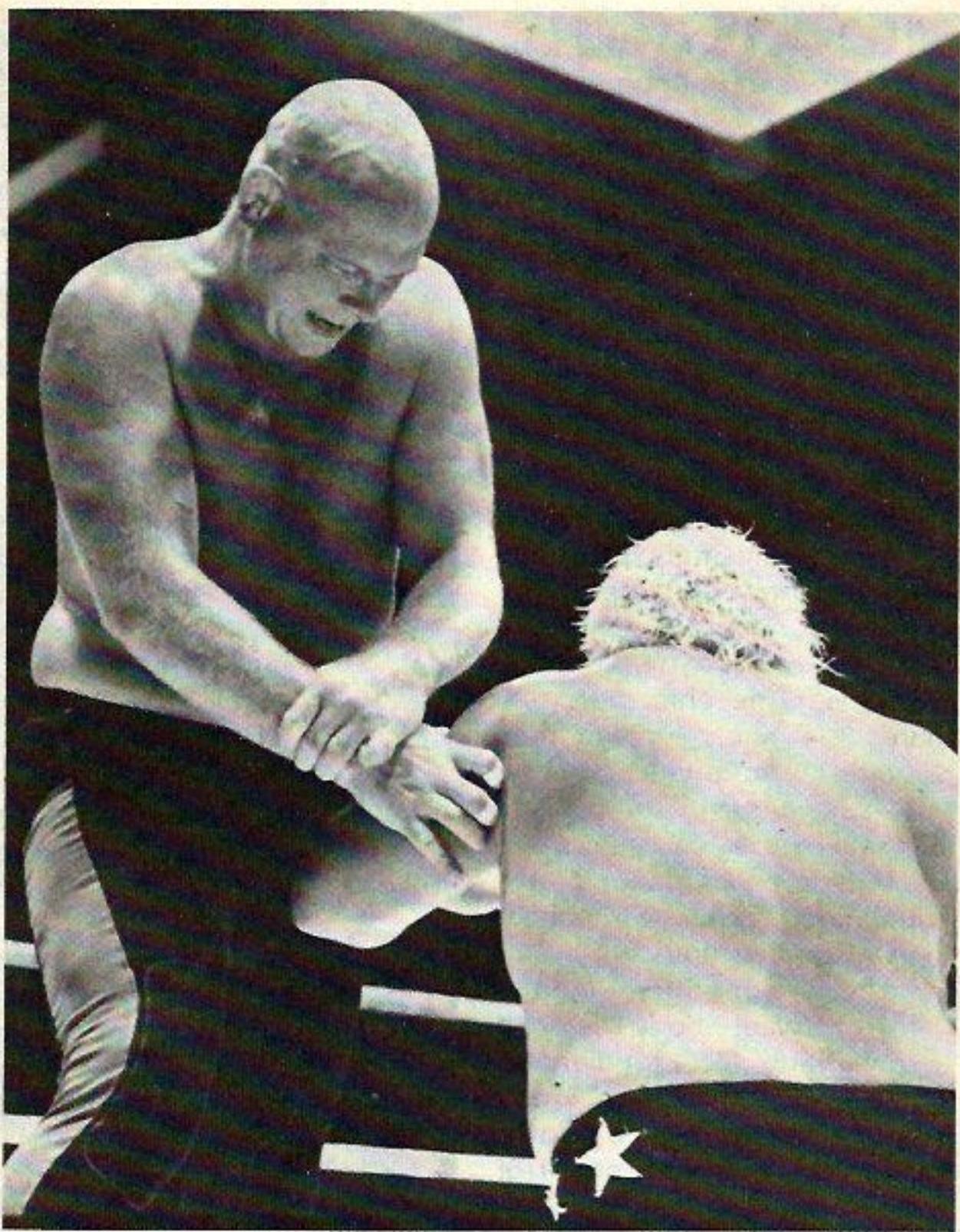
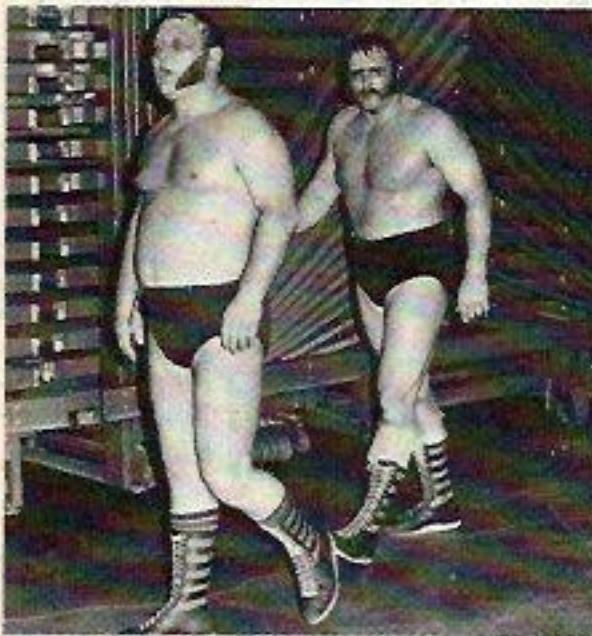
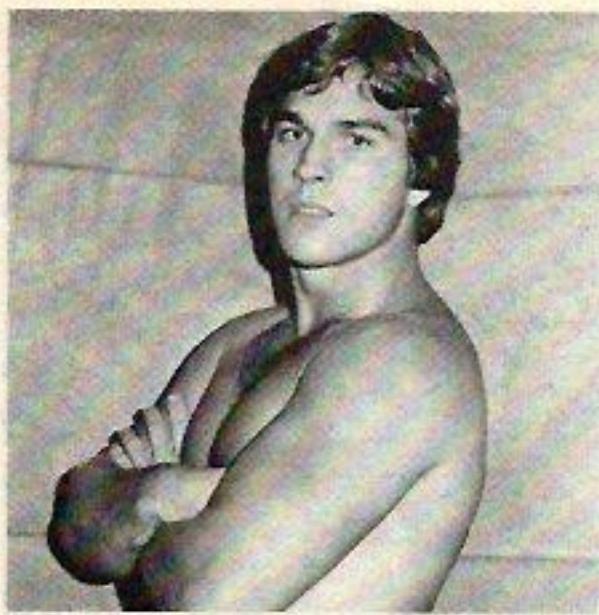
Rookie Terry Taylor shows a lot in his appearances. Quickly a crowd favorite, Taylor shows much promise and hints at contending for a major title very soon.

Another popular grappler with Georgia fans is Kevin Sullivan, former co-holder of the state tag team title with Tony Atlas. Sullivan is currently the Georgia junior heavyweight titleholder.



The Great Mephisto helps two referees break Mark Lewin's sleeperhold on Austin Idol (above). Lewin is now feuding with former stablemate, Abdullah the Butcher (below).





Rookie Terry Taylor has quickly become one of the fans' favorites (top left). Dripping blood, Gene and Ole Anderson return to the dressing room (above left). Baron Von Raschke claws Dusty Rhodes' shoulder (above). Masked Superstar strangles Mr. Wrestling II (below left). The Assassins display their teamwork (below right).



MID-ATLANTIC

By Carl Salinger

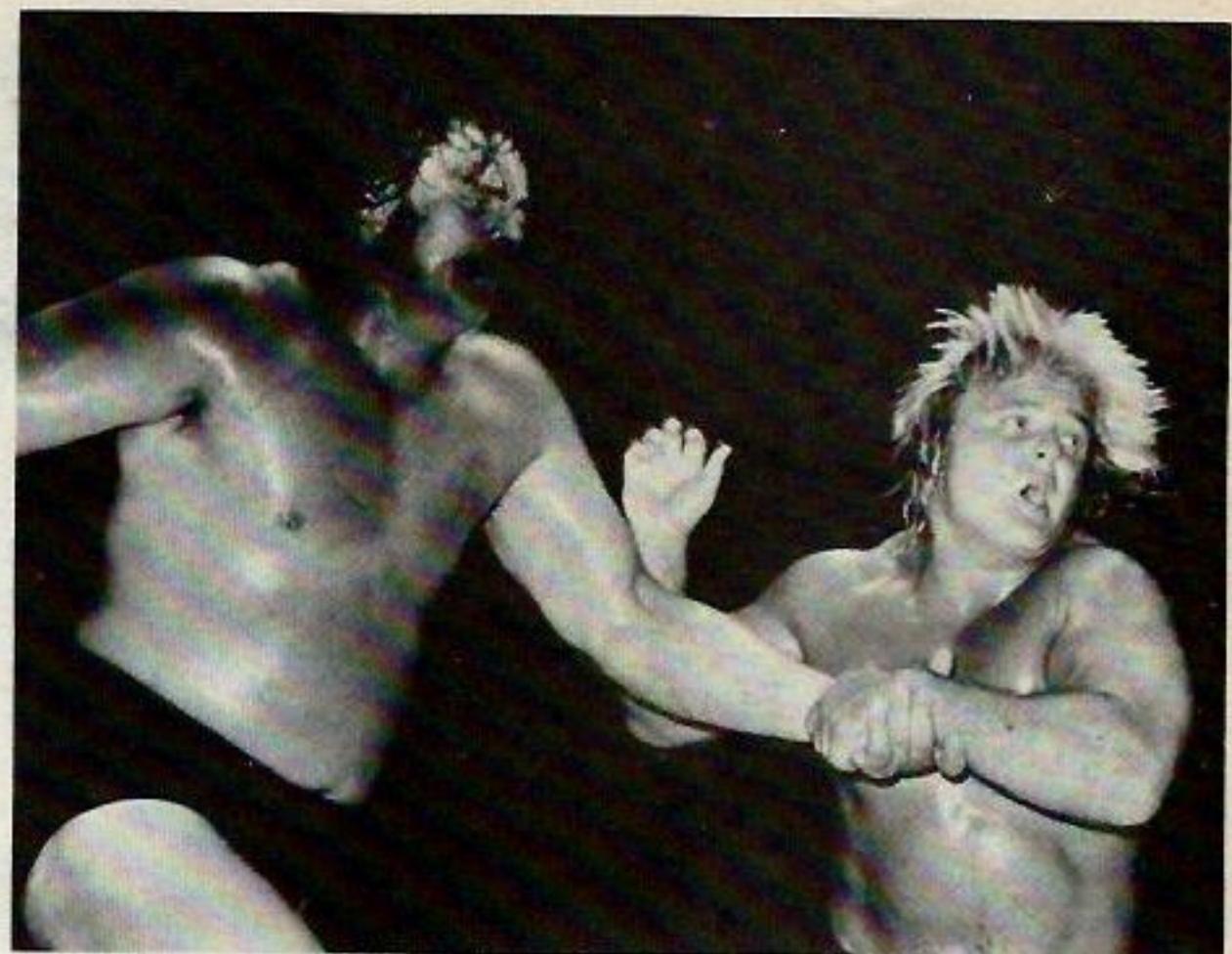
More feuds than one person could count dominate any discussion of the Mid-Atlantic area. Hateful rivals Greg Valentine and Ric Flair met for the latter's U.S. Heavyweight title and, in a stunning upset, Valentine bested his former friend for the belt.

Rick Steamboat and Jay Youngblood still pursue their old NWA tag team titles, presently held by Jimmy Snuka and Ray Stevens. In recent days, Snuka and Stevens threatened not to grant the former champions any more title shots unless they proved themselves worthy. However, intense fan outrage compelled the champions to alter their positions and give Youngblood and Steamboat their just opportunity.

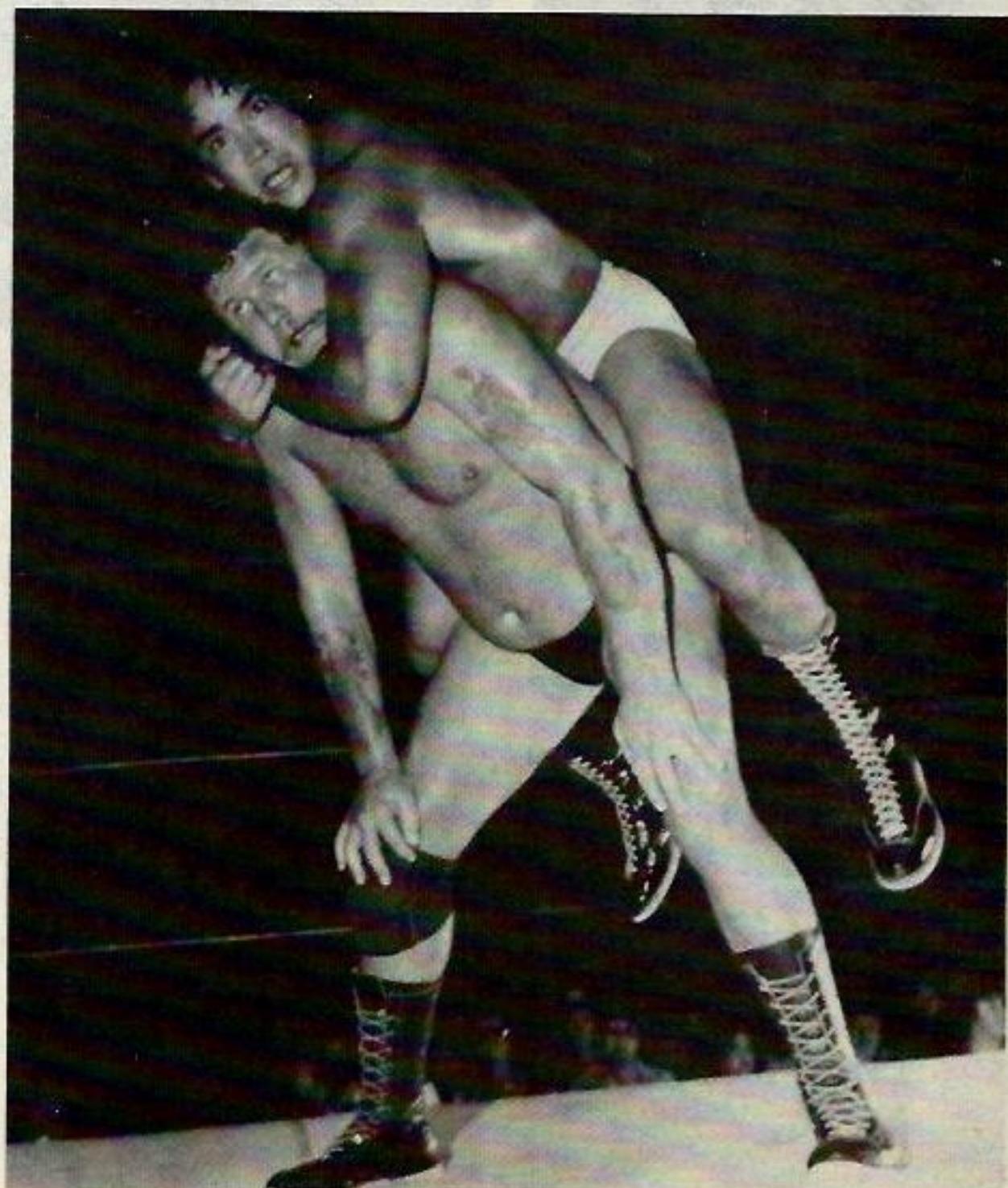
An exciting athlete by the name of Sweet Ebony Diamond is delighting local audiences. Another recent addition to the area, Enforcer Luciano, maintains his policy of terror and intimidation.

Blackjack Mulligan continues his solitary status as defender of principles. Despite vile taunts from such men as Luciano and Valentine and offers of huge sums of money to rejoin the rulebreaking ranks, Mulligan refuses to budge and follows all evil men with the same hunger for vengeance.

A new tag team, Matt Bourne and Buzz Sawyer, continue to make spirited defenses of their Mid-Atlantic tag team championship. Overall, the Mid-Atlantic region is alive with the best in wrestling excitement.

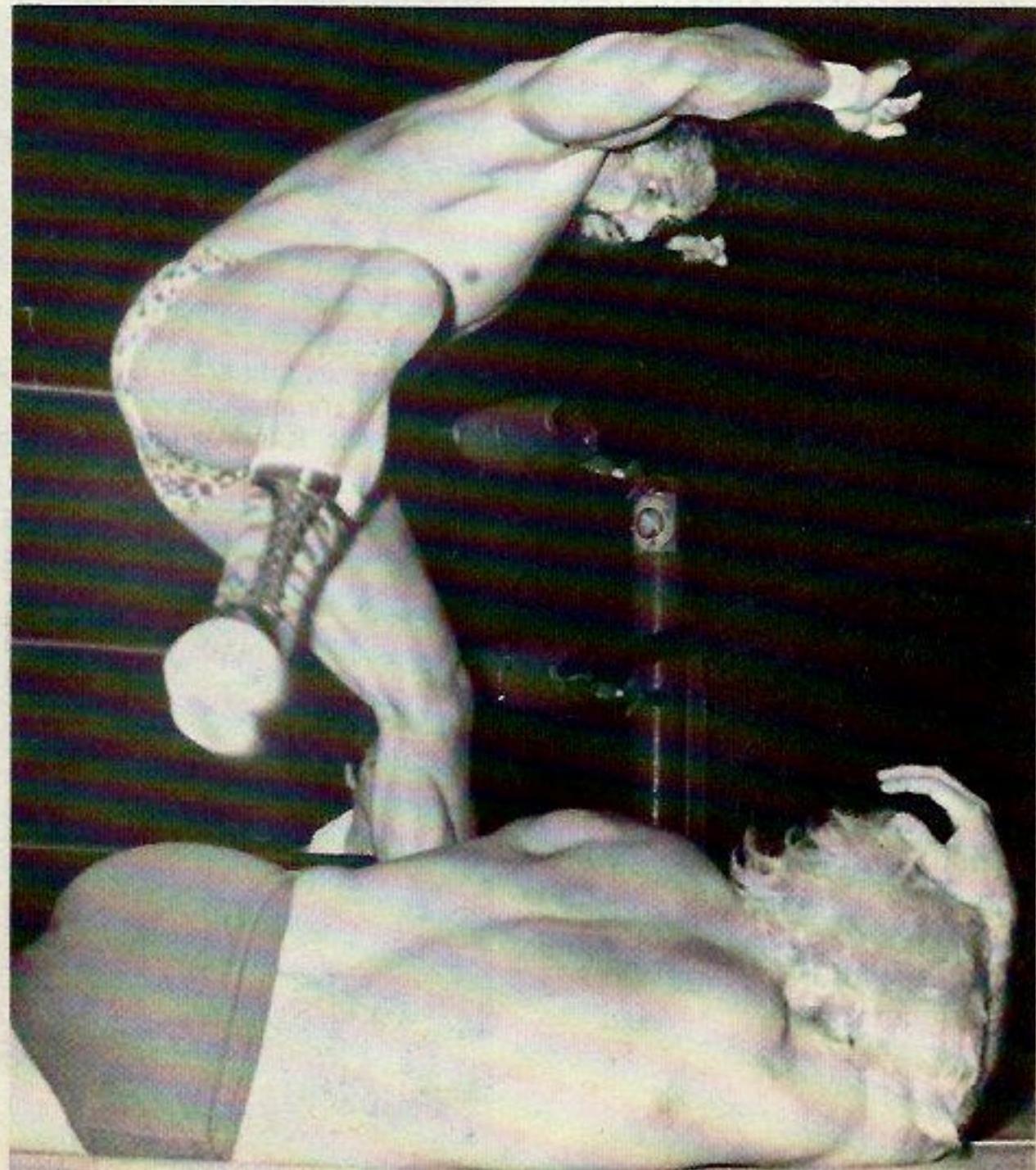
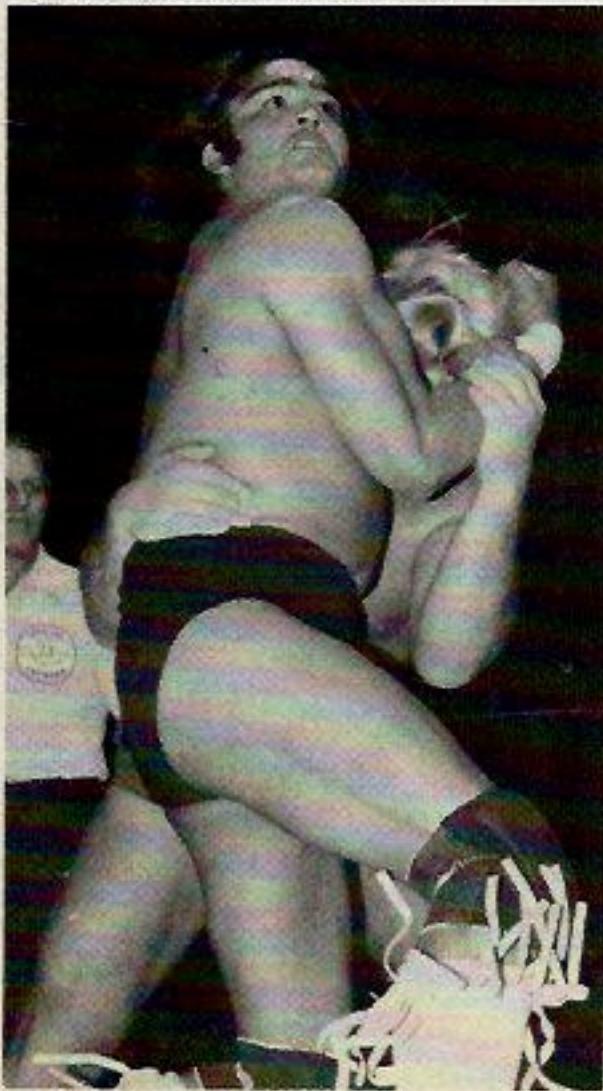


U.S. champion Greg Valentine is involved in feuds with almost every scientific wrestler in the Mid-Atlantic. Valentine throws former rulebreaker Blackjack Mulligan across the ring (above). Rick Steamboat narrowly missed capturing the NWA title from Harley Race (below).





Devious Gene Anderson guides the careers and lives of NWA tag team champions, Jimmy Snuka and Ray Stevens (above). Former partners Greg Valentine and Ric Flair are embroiled in a vicious feud (above right). Jay Youngblood looks for, and receives, the support of the crowd (below). Wild-eyed Snuka is on the attack (right).



FLORIDA

By Barry Simon

The biggest news in the Florida scene must be Bugsy McGraw winning the Florida Heavyweight championship. Bugsy has endured more than the average man or wrestler should in his unending quest to clean the state of foreign, traitorous influences. Yet, according to Sir Oliver Humperdink, manager of former champion Don Muraco, McGraw never won the title. He stole it from Muraco, Humperdink claims.

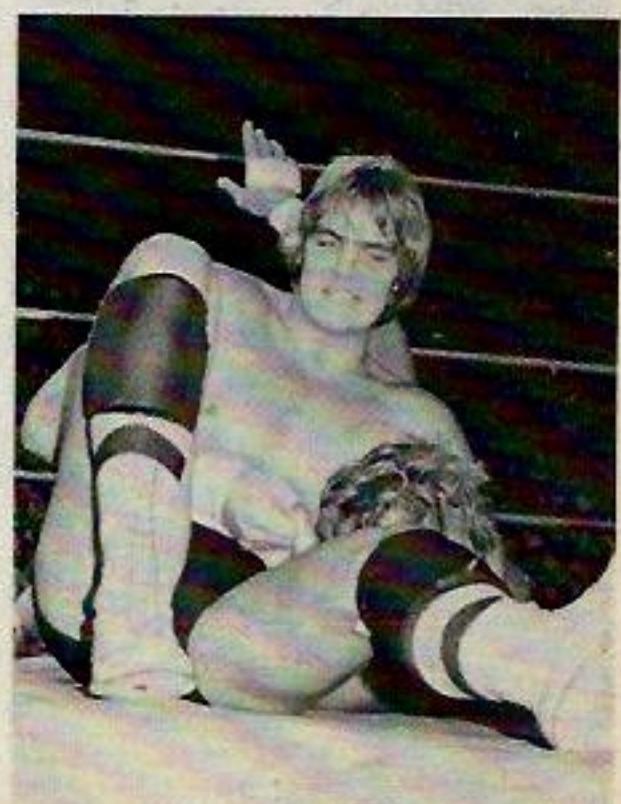
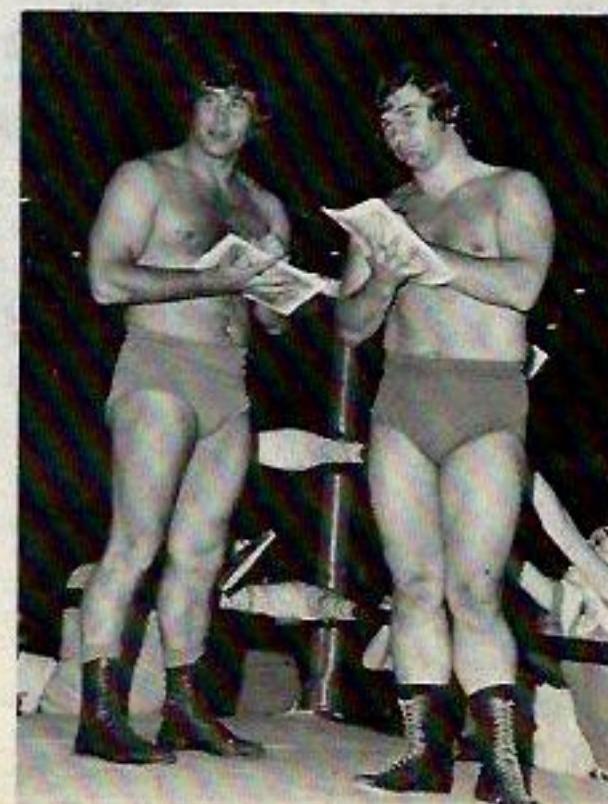
Young Barry Windham finds himself embroiled in a bitter, brutal feud with veteran rule-breaker Dick Slater. Windham has resisted all cries from friends to avoid Slater and his vicious taunts. This young man demonstrates considerable courage in turning back Slater's relentless attacks.

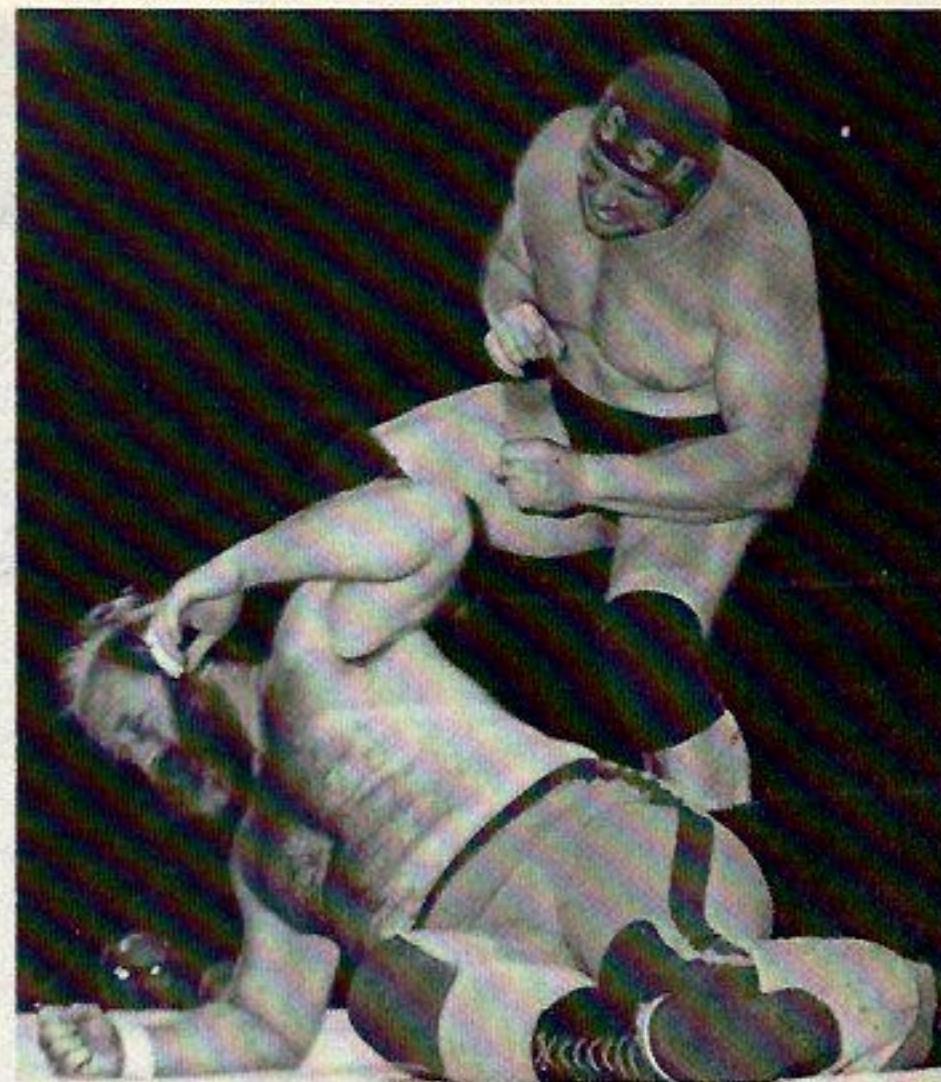
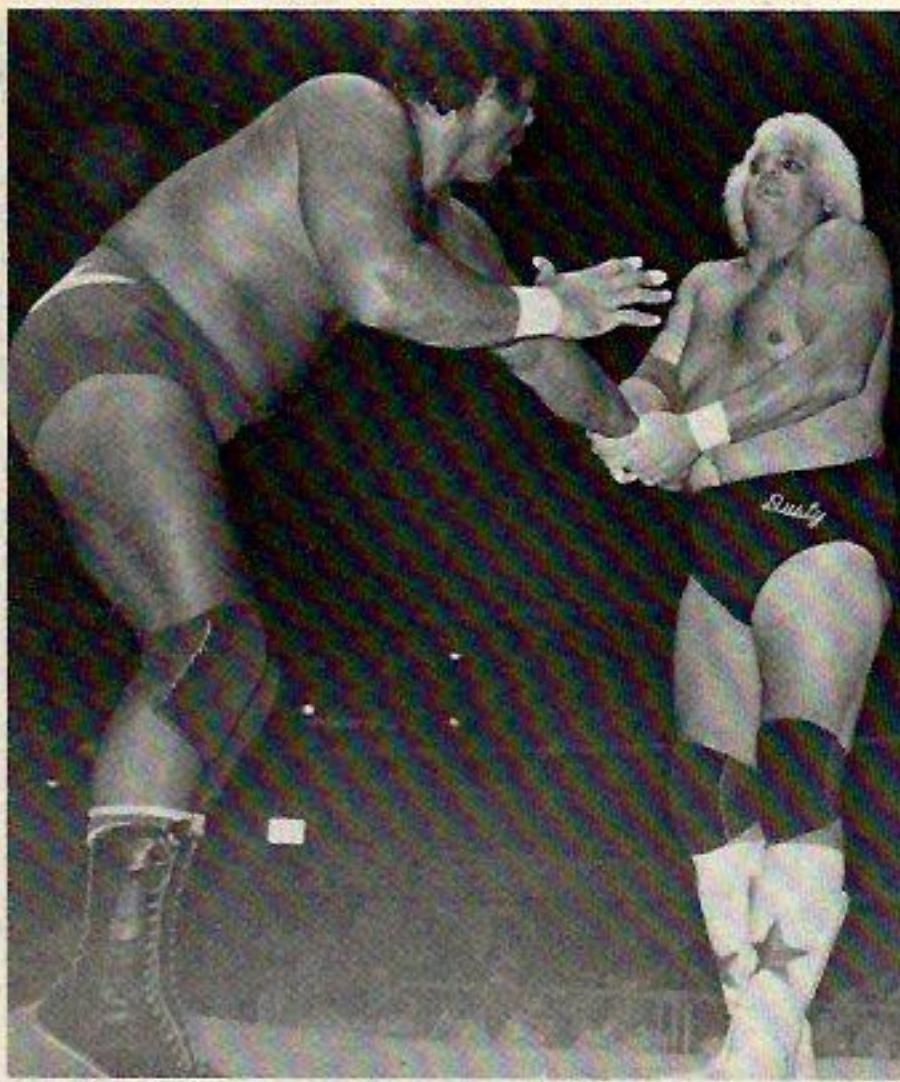
Florida tag team champions Nikolai Volkoff and Ivan Koloff continue to destroy all opposition, showing why they are one of wrestling's most feared tandems. Under the evil guidance of Sir Oliver Humperdink, Koloff and Volkoff continue to wreak havoc. Both Russians refuse to follow rules and temper their remarks about the inferior quality of American grapplers. Humperdink vows to unleash a merciless plot to drive all scientific wrestlers out of Florida.

And Dusty Rhodes' future plans remain unclear. Rhodes stands firm to his oath never to wrestle Harley Race again while the current champion holds the NWA title. But exactly what Rhodes' future plans are is still uncertain.

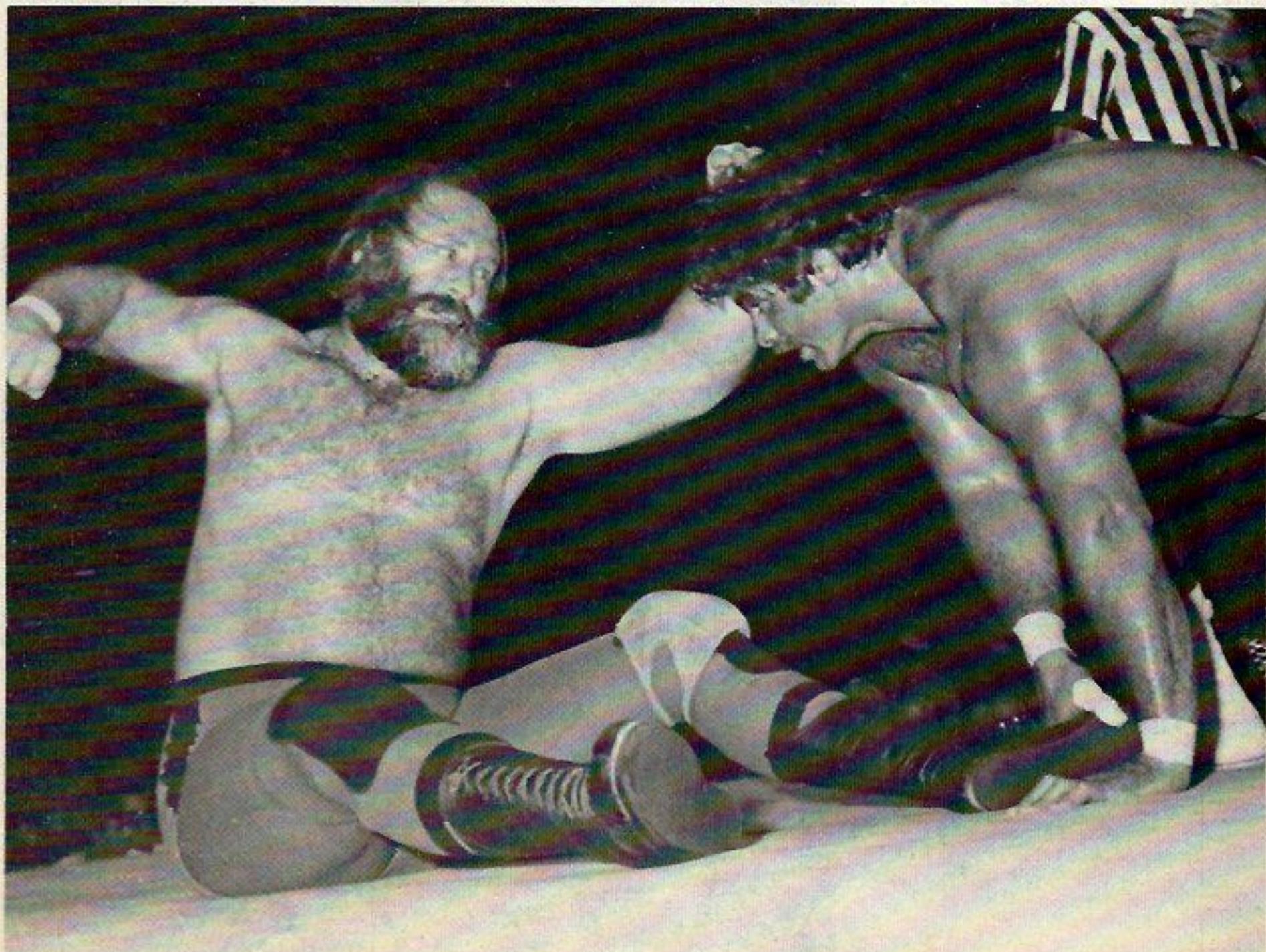


The treacherous Ivan Koloff whips Dusty Rhodes with a chain (above). The Briscos (below left) are intent on regaining the Florida tag team titles. Barry Windham, a former referee, is making life difficult for area rulebreakers (below right).





Rhodes twists Don Muraco's arm and whips him across the ring (above left). Russian giant Nikolai Volkoff stomps Bugsy McGraw (above right). Bugsy slugs Muraco from a sitting position (below).



NEW ORLEANS

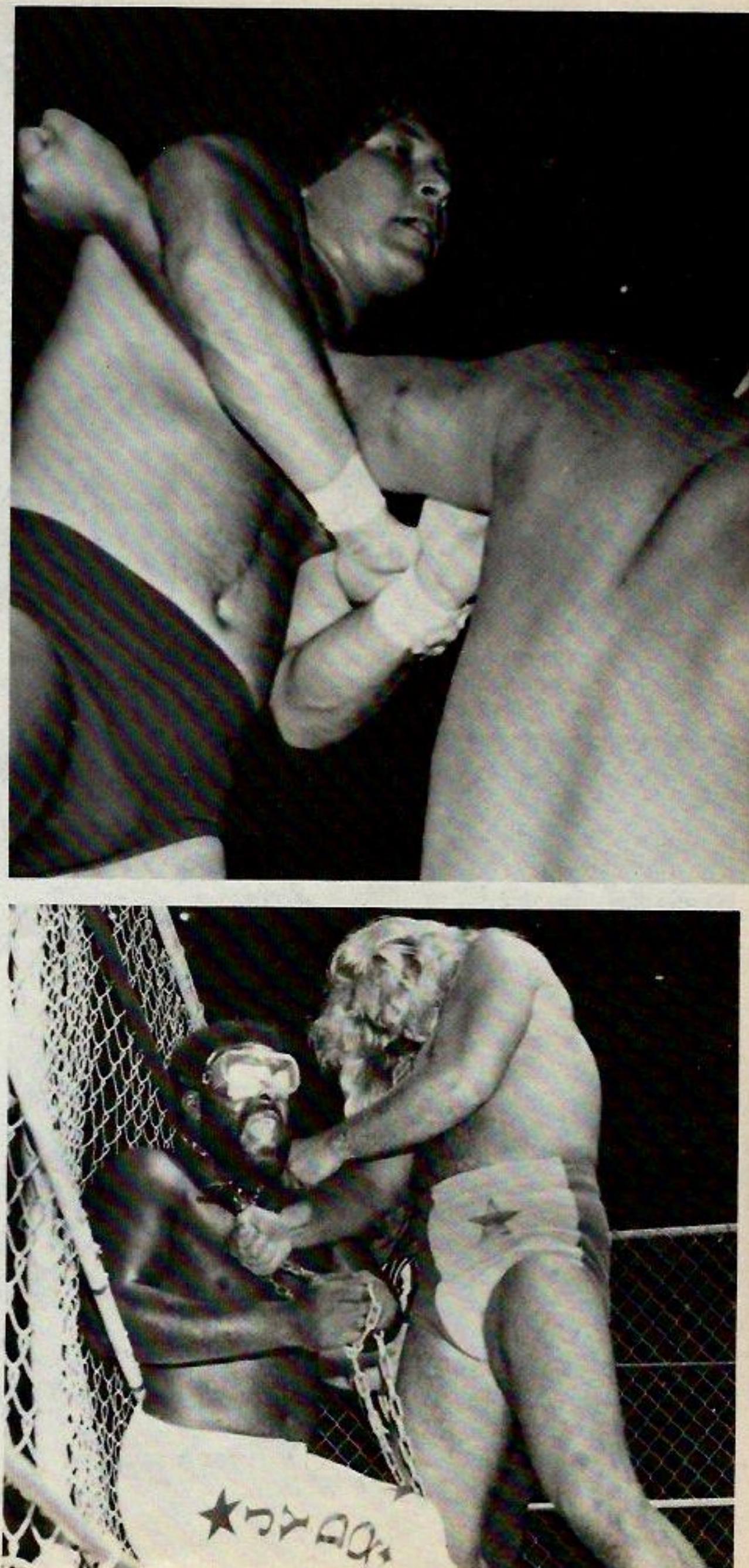
By Matthew Dobson

Leading this pack of outstanding young wrestlers and veterans is Ted DiBiase, the reigning North American Heavyweight champion. DiBiase's unique blend of strength and speed, plus a fine appreciation of the fans who support him, make him one of the top draws in the area.

Another big fan favorite is the "Candy Man," Ray Candy. Only Candy demonstrated enough guts to turn back the Asian menace, Killer Khan. Candy fears no man and was more than willing to take on Khan, a complete lunatic who's trying to maim foes from one end of the state to the next.

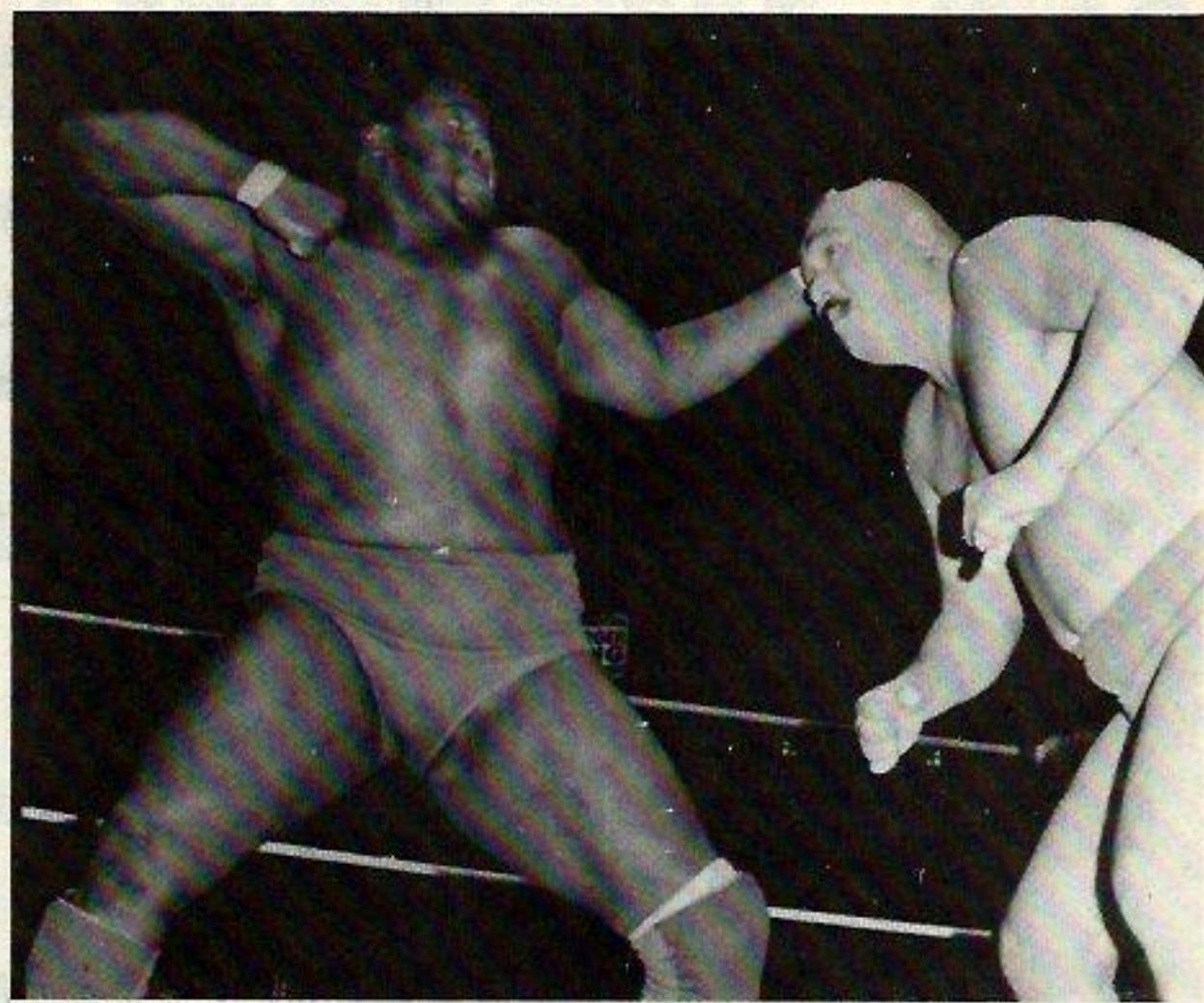
Speaking of feuds, a really big one has shaped up between Ken Mantel, Louisiana State Champion, and fan favorite Paul Orndorff. Despite Mantel's ruthless attempts to intimidate Orndorff both in and out of the ring, Orndorff remains firm in his loyalty to the fans and the principles of scientific wrestling.

A human interest story that is sweeping beyond the state boundaries is the remarkable courage of Junkyard Dog. Blinded in a disgusting ring attack, Junkyard continues to wrestle despite his infliction. He accepts no pity and has adapted incredibly well to his debilitating condition. Michael Hayes chooses to launch all-out war on Junkyard. Though all would understand his decision to avoid matches until fully recuperated, Junkyard refuses to succumb to his handicap. He is a great man.

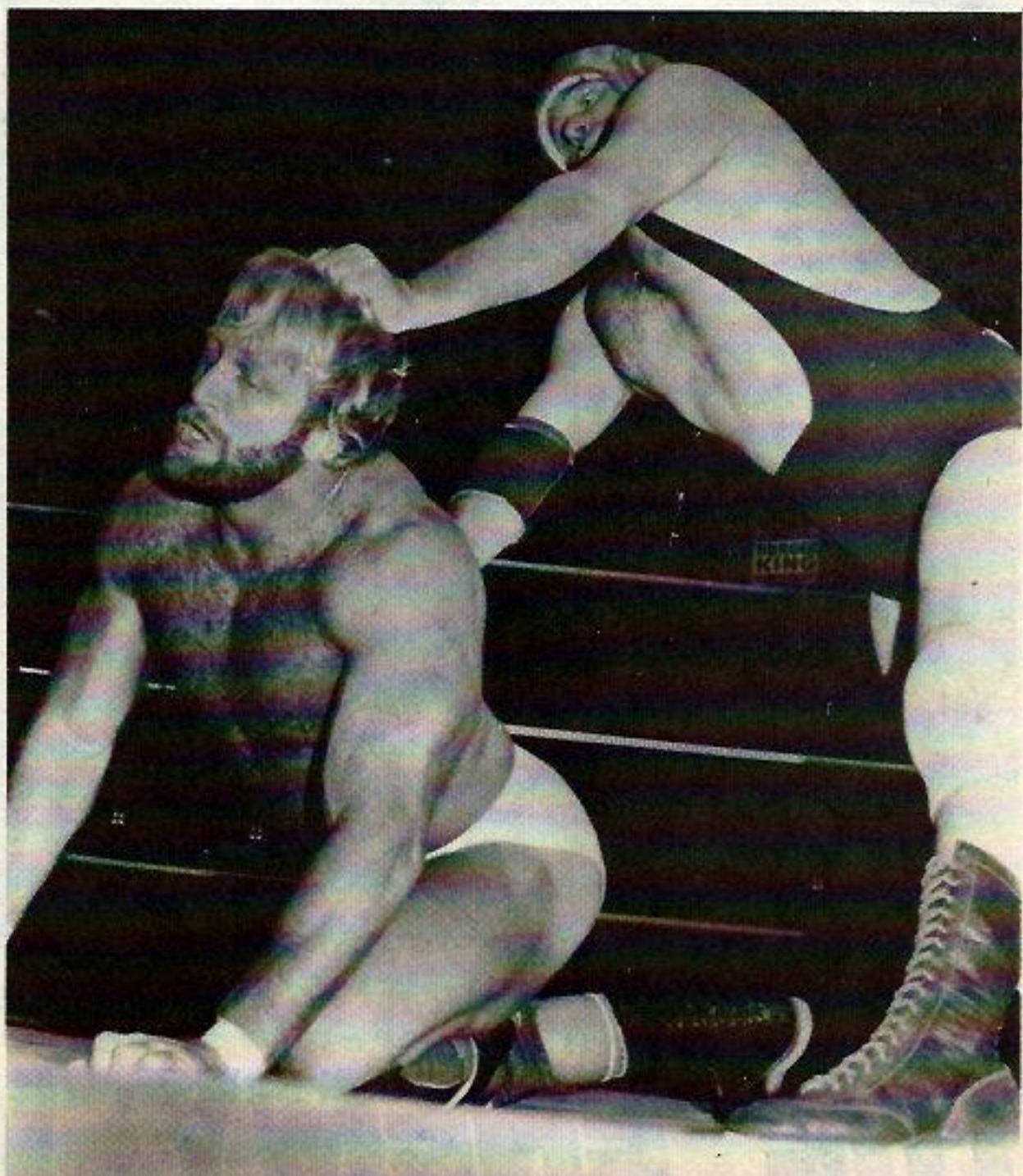




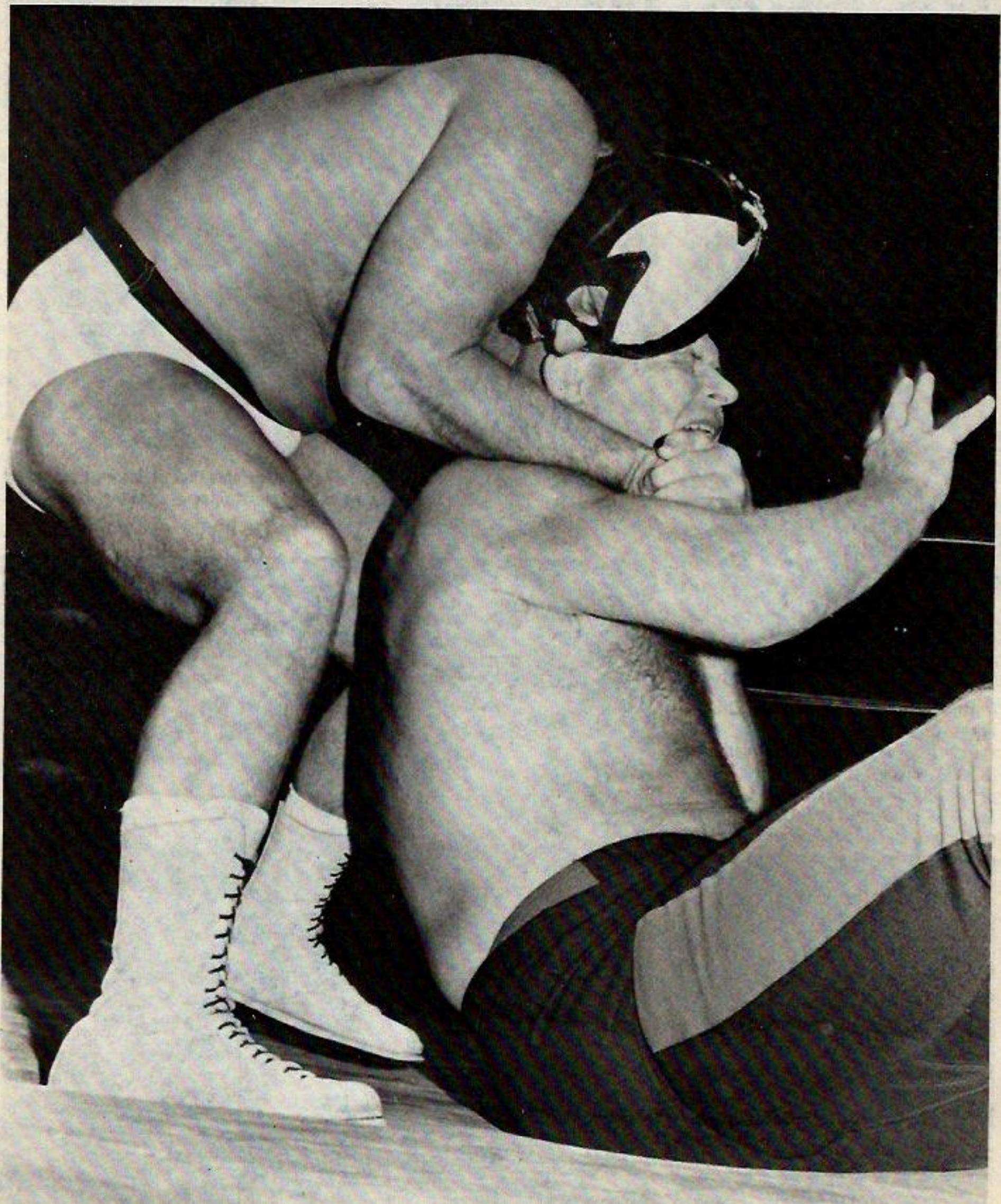
North American champion Ted DiBiase does not like Killer Khan nor what he stands for. Ted locks up the Killer's arm (above). Michael Hayes takes advantage of the blinded Junkyard Dog (opposite left). Terry Gordy and Dusty Rhodes engage in a bloody bullrope match (below).



The New Orleans fans have given Ray Candy the unenviable task of driving Khan out of the area (above). Ken Mantell, wearing a headgear to secure his wig, slams Paul Orndorff's face to the mat (below).



MR. WRESTLING II --



THE ENEMY WITHIN

A STRANGE DISEASE everyone thought was alien to Mr. Wrestling II sweeps his masked face. Other wrestlers contract the disease from time to time. Often this illness is brought on by too many matches against too many rule-breakers. Often this disease is cured by rest.

For others, that is. As all fans realize, II is a unique individual. He is not given to fits of paranoia or spasms of concern. He goes about his job in the same reasoned, determined approach all great men do.

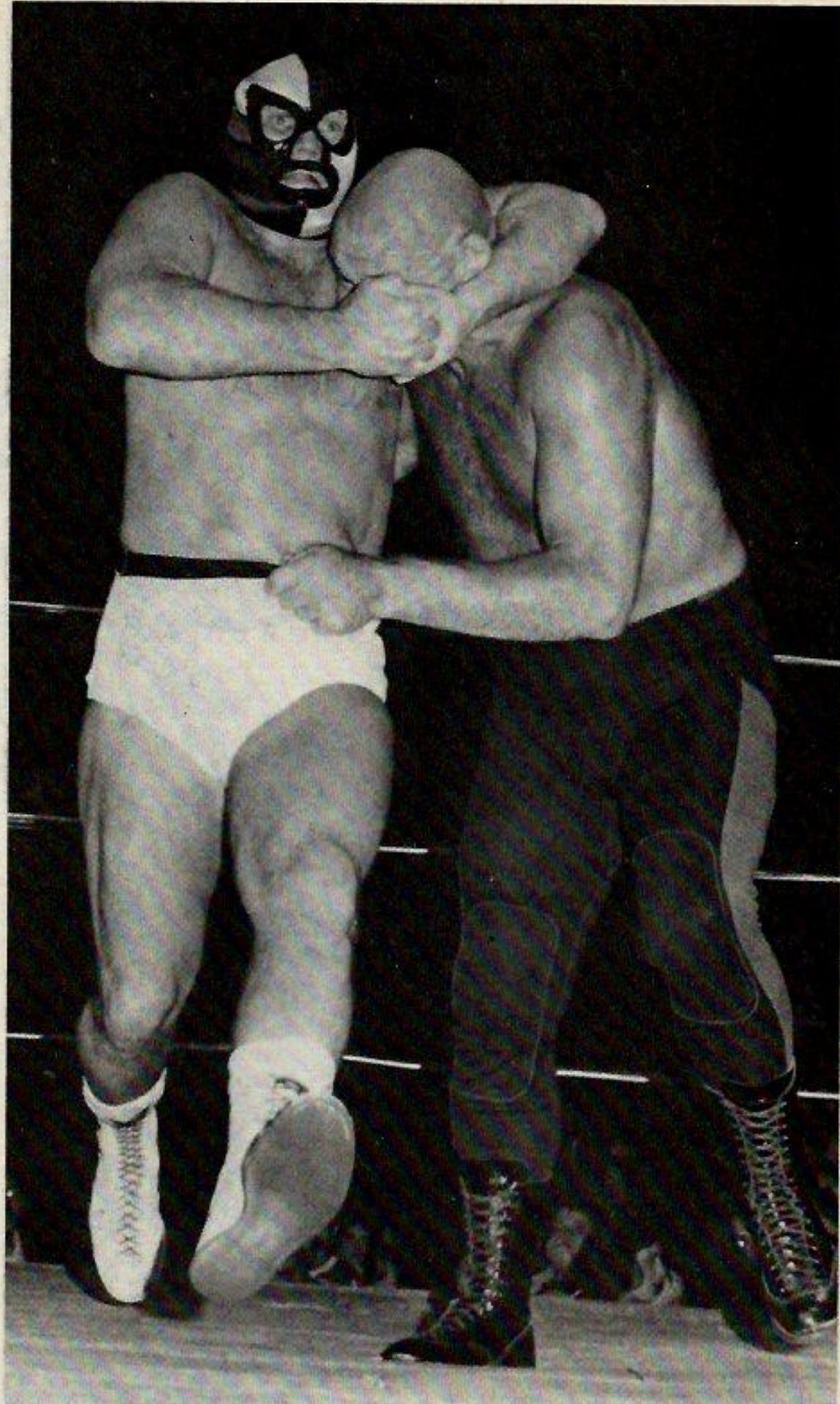
But II's outlook has changed. It is unknown whether this portends a real and fundamental alteration in the man beloved by millions or a temporary reaction to extraordinary pressures, by II's standards.

To begin, Mr. Wrestling II took the peculiar step of changing the style of his mask. Previously, II's mask glinted with white purity, a symbol of his manifest integrity and love for all people, no matter where they live.

Now black cuts an ominous path through II's mask. The great scientific wrestler denies this denotes any change in wrestling temperament, but is a defense mechanism designed to thwart Masked Superstar's vow to pull off the mask and show the world "II's ugly kisser."

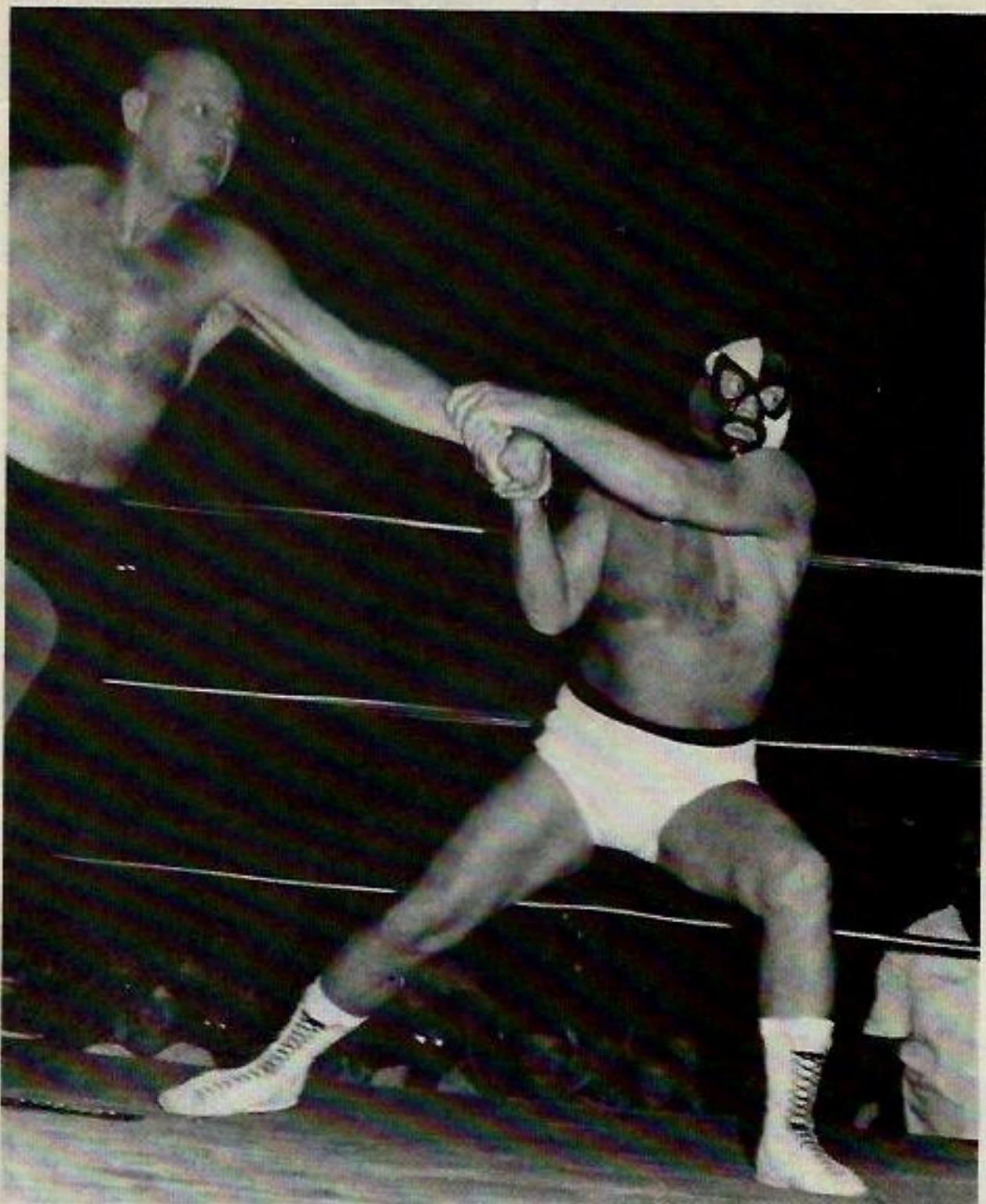
"No one unmasks me," said II. "I'd sooner die than be unmasked. This new mask makes it impossible for Superstar to pull it off. If he wants to try, fine. It's his life, not mine."

Masked Superstar moves in



Mr. Wrestling II's new mask is not a sign of an altered wrestling style. It is merely a way to ready himself for his battle with Masked Superstar. In anticipation of Superstar's tactics, II takes on Baron Von Raschke.

In a sport of continual turmoil, the name of Mr. Wrestling II stands firm in its unwavering pursuit of the highest principles and courage. However, II's unbroken feud with Masked Superstar has implanted the seeds of paranoia within the masked man, a poison which could destroy II



Wrestling II works over Von Raschke (above), but his primary concern is Masked Superstar, the man who is obsessed with running the popular II out of the sport. II (below) is unsure that his nemesis is the same Masked Superstar who has caused him so much trouble in the past.

and out of Georgia like the tide on the beach. Each time Superstar invades this state, he selects II as his principal foe.

"Don't like the guy, that's all," said Superstar, smirking behind his mask.

II doesn't accept such a quick, superficial explanation. Instead, II envisions Superstar's repeated forays as part of a wider, more sinister plan to destroy him and all he stands for.

"First off, I don't think this is the same Masked Superstar who was in Georgia last time or the time before," said II, his mask frowning. "I detect certain differences. I think they keep

bringing in different kinds of semi-humans to wrestle under the guise of Masked Superstar. That's what I think they're doing."

"They" refers to a vast group led by evil men poisoning the wells of Georgia wrestling. When pressed for specifics, II's mask creases in inner turmoil and his lips twist and twitch with increasing rage.

"I know for a fact that Great Mephisto is behind all this. My inside story says that Mephisto is plotting to destroy me and drive me out of wrestling.

"By bringing a goon like Masked Superstar, or whomever he may be, into Georgia and tying down my energies, they hope to weaken me and enable one of their other bums to beat me.

"Well, that isn't going to happen. I want to say this to Masked Superstar and Great Mephisto and any other bum who might be inclined to believe that they can get Mr. Wrestling II out of wrestling.

"If you think you can ever drive me out and take off my mask, buddy, you've got another thing coming. I have never heard of such a stupid plot led by more stupid individuals.

"I stand firm in my convictions and firm in my principles. Nothing can dissuade me from my chosen path, absolutely not! Mr. Wrestling II is going to be here a long time after any of you bums and dead-heads and fools are long gone.

"So I just want to assure all my fans that nothing or no one will stop me. As I said, absolutely not!

As fans may detect, II's tone is more bitter than his usual calm, reasoned demeanor. Apparently II believes himself the subject of a plot. And, despite pointed assertions to the contrary, the Georgia public must worry lest the rage and animal fury exhibited by others finally claims a man like Mr. Wrestling II. □

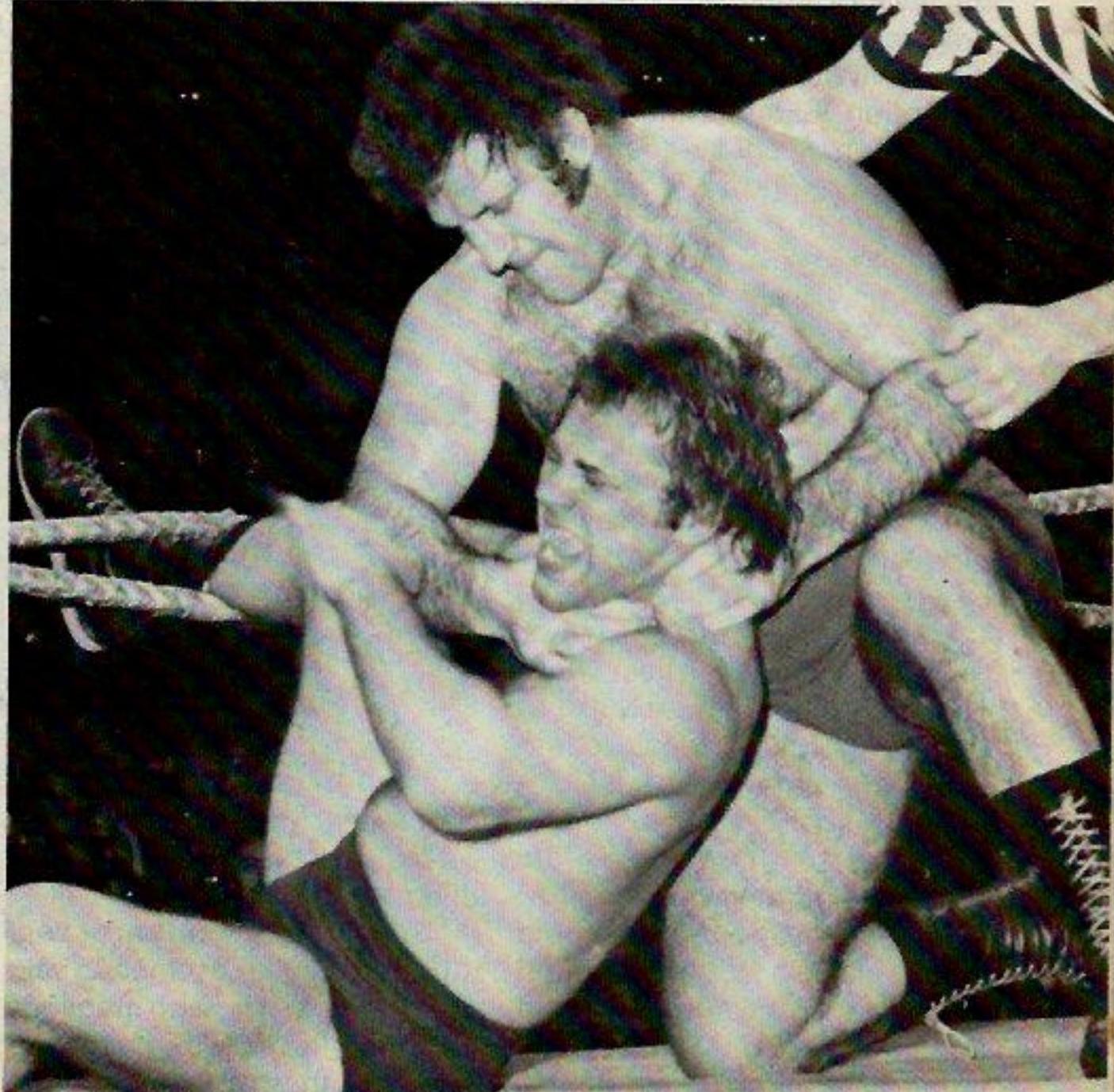


After Stopping The Zbyszko Monster DOES BRUNO WANT BACKLUND NEXT?

Many fans now wonder about the future plans of Bruno Sammartino. Now that the Living Legend disposed of rival Larry Zbyszko in Shea Stadium's steel cage, people ponder Bruno's next move. Will the great man go after the WWF title held by Bob Backlund?

"YOU KNOW, it's me and Bob Backlund before the largest doggone crowd I've ever seen. All around me are people. Faces and faces and faces. I can't see anything but faces for miles and miles. They keep cheering, but I can't hear what they're saying. I get Backlund in a bearhug and start squeezing. He goes limp and falls down. I have the WWF belt. The crowd chants, 'Bruno, Bruno.' I walk around the ring holding the belt. I keep waving the belt, but I can't see my face. You know how you can't see your face in dreams. I can't see my face and I can't tell if I'm happy or not. Then I wake up."

Bruno Sammartino flipped the pages of one of his many black-bound scrapbooks. Memories of titles past rifled past Bruno's penetrating blue eyes. There was the night he whipped Buddy Rogers for the WWF title in 48 seconds. There was the night he lost the title to Ivan Koloff. And the evening he whipped Stan Stasiak to regain



With Larry Zbyszko aside, speculation grows stronger that Bruno Sammartino will challenge Bob Backlund for the WWF title.

the title.

But Sammartino sped past those pages, finally pausing on clips from the evening Superstar Billy Graham beat him in Baltimore, a match forever scarred with controversy whether Graham's foot was on the ropes while delivering the finishing blows.

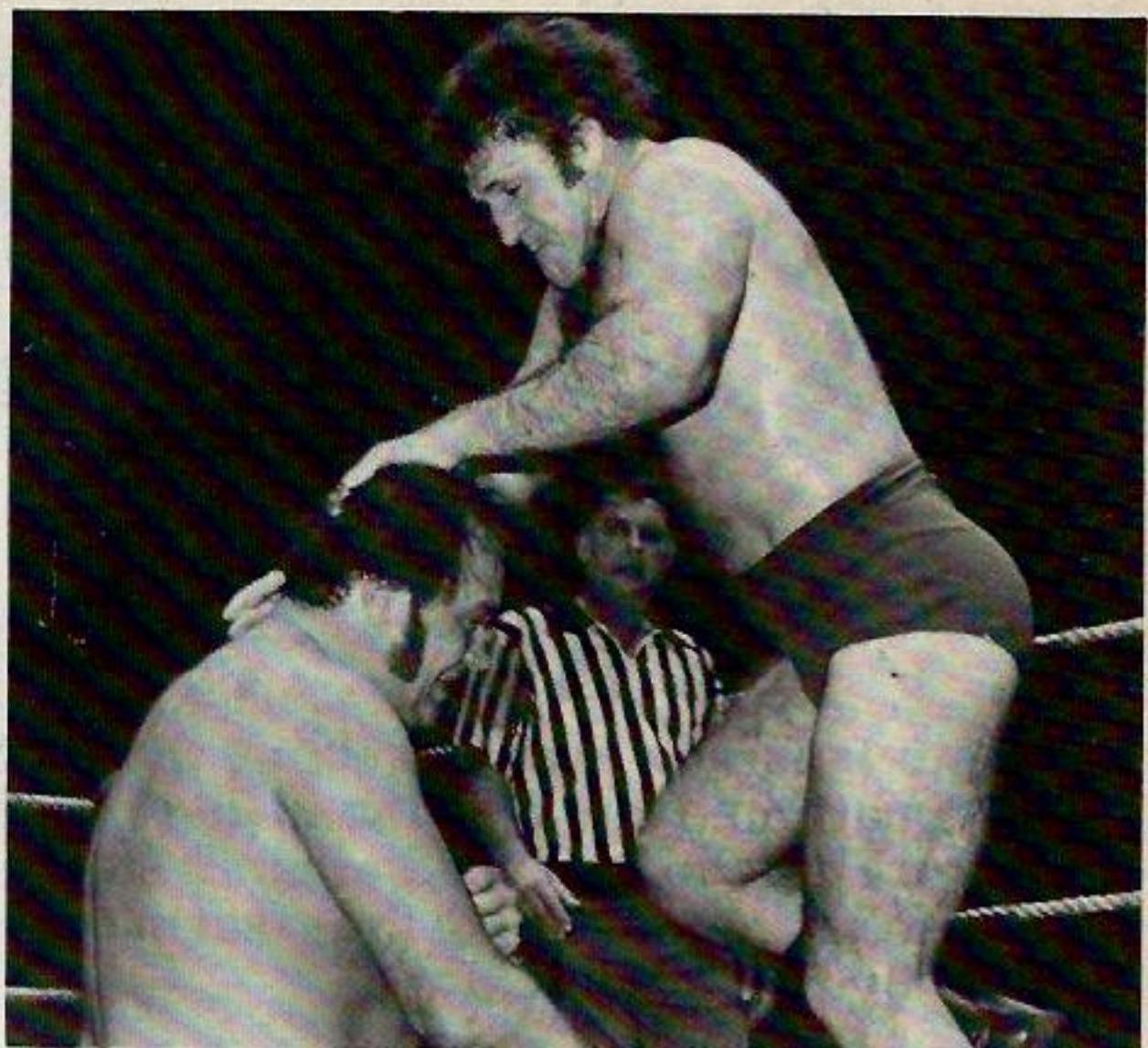
"Dirty creep," muttered Sammartino, his eyes never leaving the yellowed newspaper story.

The name Bruno Sammartino was always synonymous with excellence and ambition. And one further word: champion. But all the past glories, current adoration, and future respect cannot compensate for the unhealed wounds left by the loss of the WWF championship. As much as Bruno insists he is content with his current status, the fever of a title reign grips his hot blood as it does countless others. With one formidable exception. Sammartino can do something about quenching the ambition. If he wants.

"Many people have approached me about wrestling Backlund," said Sammartino. "They always tell me I should try and get my title back. I always respond with, 'Why?' It isn't like Backlund is some nut disgracing the belt. Doggone, Backlund has a lot of talent, is a nice kid, and I think he's been one heckuva champion."

For the longest time, Sammartino's energies were devoted to the ruthless quest of Larry Zbyszko's destruction. Finally, their feud was settled in a steel cage in Shea Stadium. Bruno had vowed to retire if he lost. He didn't lose.

"I couldn't think of anything else while I had to fight that Frankenstein every time," said Sammartino. "But that is all behind me. Now I must decide what is the next path for Bruno Sammartino."



Sammartino pounds away at Stan Stasiak en route to regaining the title in 1973 (above). Bruno smashed Zbyszko's face into the corner of the ring apron during one of their two Madison Square Garden encounters (below).

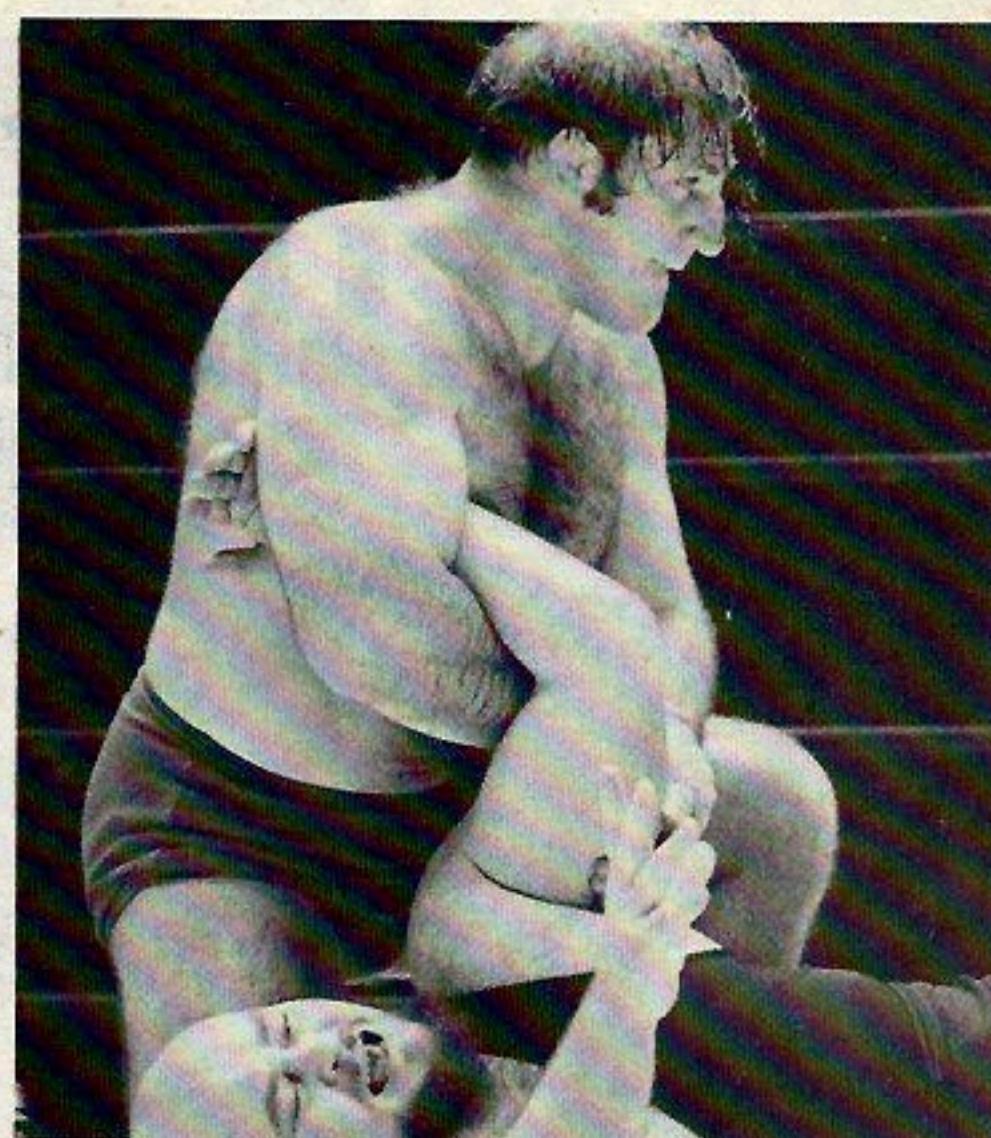
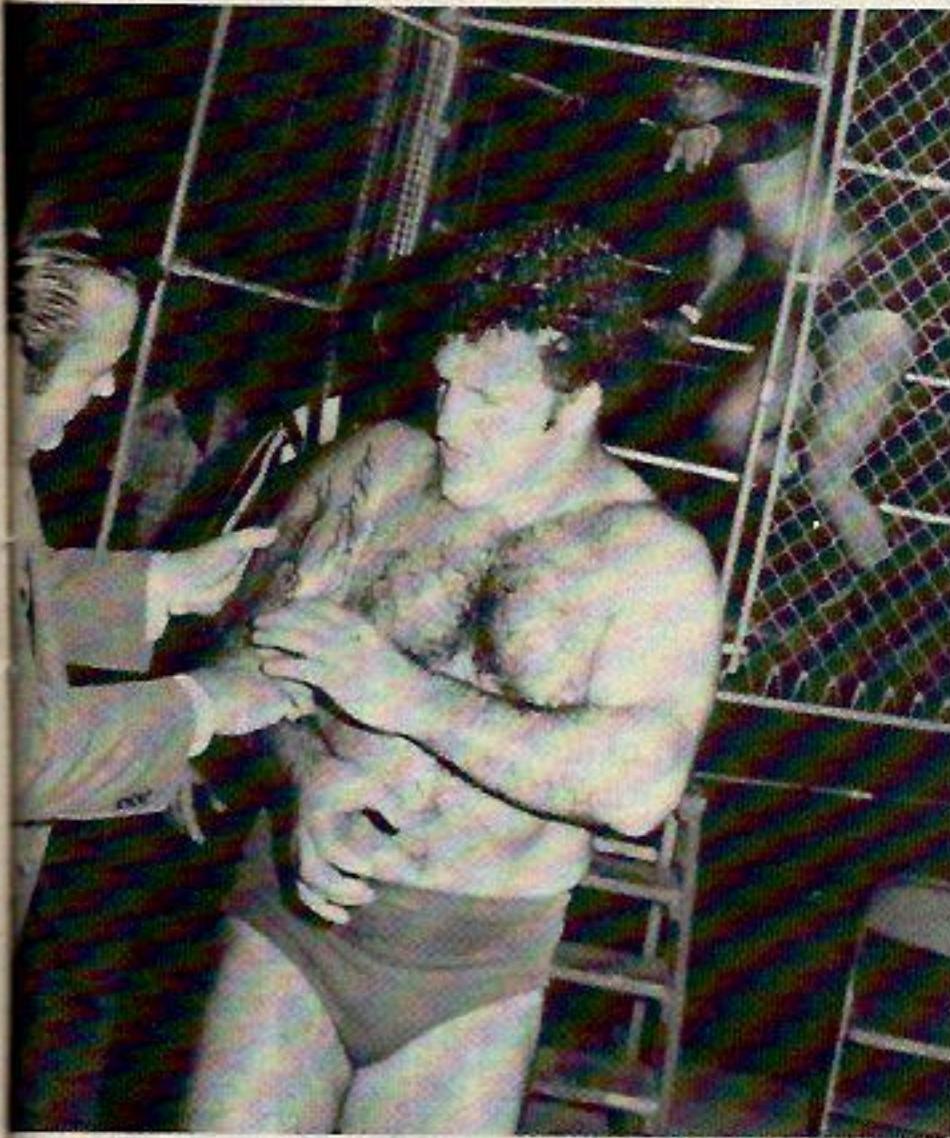


A man instrumental in both Backlund's and Sammartino's successes offers a candid perspective on Bruno's dilemma.

"Bruno and Bob are very different types of men," said Arnold Skoaland, who manages both men. "Yet in important aspects, they're very similar. Both are extremely dedicated to their sport and fans, work very

hard, and are very intense competitors. But Bruno always saw himself as somehow transcending wrestling, sort of a spokesman for all that is good and decent in the world. While being champion is quite important to Bob, I always felt the belt meant more to Sammartino in deeply fundamental ways."

Being champion is important



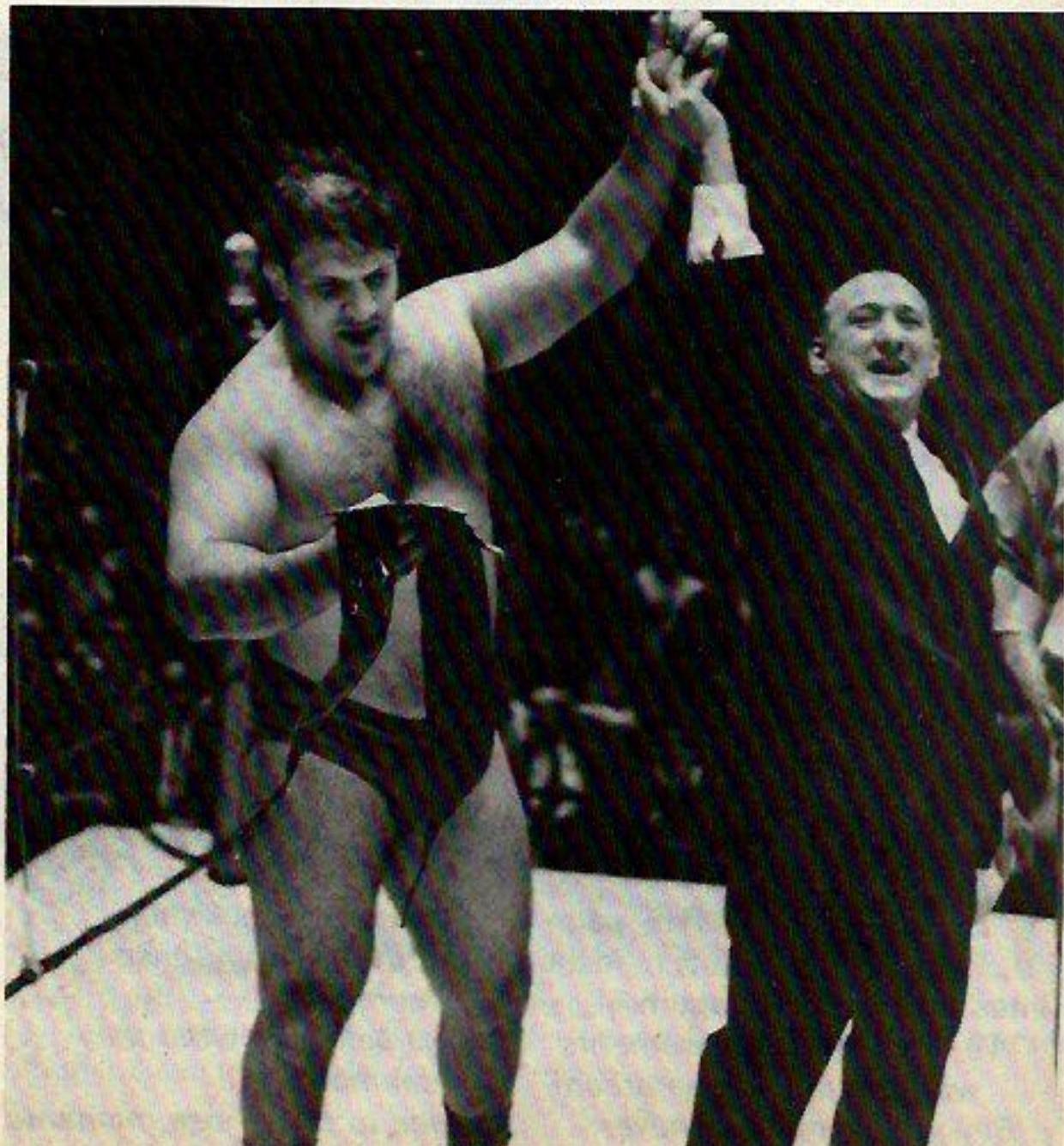
to Sammartino. Whenever he contemplates again holding the belt, his eyes gloss over with anticipation. But the pressing question remains whether he would truly be happy undergoing the relentless strain of defending the title night after night against every contender, good or bad, in the area.

"I think it's very strange how I woke up before I could see my reaction to winning the belt," said Sammartino. "I really don't know how I would feel about being champion again. I'd be a liar if I said it wouldn't be a rewarding experience. But there are many things to consider, many things."

"And people forget that I still must wrestle Backlund. Well, that would be a great match, you know, we'd pack the stands, people would be coming from miles around. They'd have to stand on each other's shoulders to see the action."

The distant chants of "Bruno, Bruno" continued through the closed scrapbook. □

Arnold Skoaland examines Bruno's cuts following the Legend's cage match victory over Zbyszko at Shea Stadium (above left). Bruno's seven-and-a-half-year WWF reign is stopped by Ivan Koloff in 1971 (above right). Bruno captures the title from Buddy Rogers in 1963 (below).



THE APARTMENT WRESTLING MATCH...

FOR
YOUR
EYES
ONLY!



TEARS STAINED THE page. The weeping beauty read the lines over and over again:

We are only given moments with the magic of a dream, Beyond control and never

*when we seek them.
I've lived within those
moments,
And believing what they
seemed,
Tried to turn those moments*

into seasons.
Those words spoke of her life, her failure. She had tried to leave her dreams behind, but her stray moments of glory haunted every attempt to lead a normal

existence. Madge ached to be great one more time.

She put the book down. Memories of an apartment wrestling match flooded her mind. Could it be years since she was last the center of attention? She had wrestled a magnificent woman named Hester. Madge could still feel that beauty's body straining against her, an electric power she has never equalled. And the people enthralled by the two: the wealthiest, most powerful men and women in New York. For one brief hour, Madge knew what it was to feel important, special.

After the match, Madge made her way back to Ohio. She tried to fit into society, anonymously living a comfortable life. There were two broken engagements and more jobs than most people have in a lifetime. Love or work wasn't enough to satisfy the hunger in her soul. There was



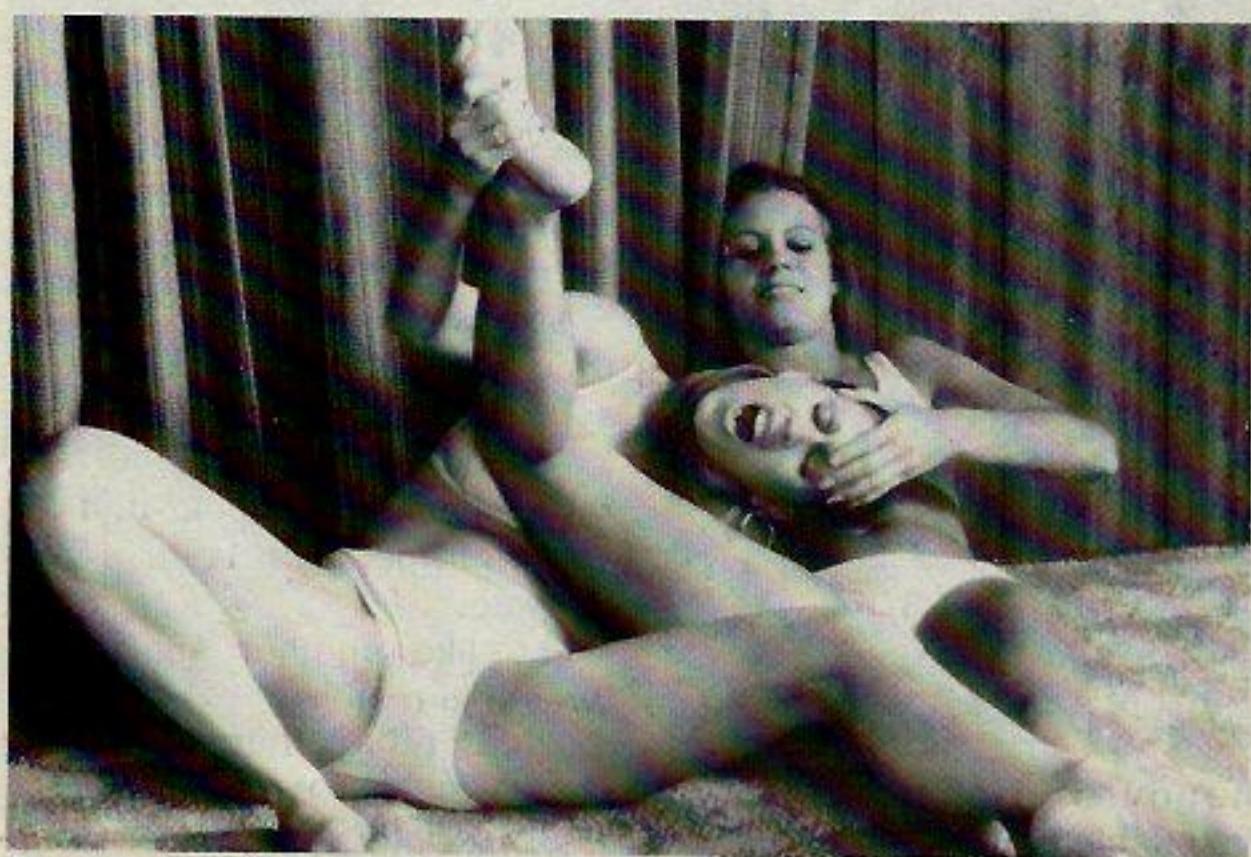
In a moment of sheer glory, Hester brilliantly ties up Madge's whole body, causing her to suffer immense pain. This was not the glory Madge had thought would bring some meaning and purpose back to her life.

Years ago, a desperate young woman tried for glory as an apartment wrestler. She failed then. Now, her life may depend on whether or not she can succeed on her second attempt

something more important she wanted to do, although she didn't know what it was.

Madge had been seeing a psychiatrist for over six months. Each session ended with the question, "Why do you need the world's admiration?" It was a question Madge still hadn't been able to answer.

Finally, the psychiatrist suggested, "Maybe you should live through that apartment wrestling experience again. Try to discover what thrilled you, why nothing else can satisfy your craving for happiness. Perhaps if the experience was fresher in your mind, we could analyze it more successfully. Then, we may be able to cure your neurosis, allow you to live a



Even though Hester's leg is in a vulnerable position, it does not stop her from carrying out her strategy of allowing Madge to retain the upper hand. This match did not fulfill Madge's dream for ultimate glory.



Madge forces Hester's powerful legs to crumble under her strength as she takes the advantage (above). Moments later the situation is reversed (below).



happy life, without this insatiable need for notoriety and fame."

Madge shocked herself at how happy she was at the idea. An hour after leaving the doctor's

office, her hands were trembling as she dialed a New York number. Was William Marlowe still living there? Did he still have connections with apartment wrestling? The phone was ringing. Something in the pit of Madge's stomach hoped no one would be home. The click of the receiver was heard.

"Hello?" His voice was unmistakable.

Madge took a deep breath, then blurted out her name and asked, "Do you remember me?"

"I'll be damned. Of course I remember you. I could just as easily forget Icarus or Don Quixote."

"I'd like another apartment wrestling match."

"I don't think there are any in Ohio. I could be wrong, though."

"I'll come to New York. I must do this." Without realizing why, Madge began to tell Marlowe her entire story. The poet listened in silence, waiting for the flood of

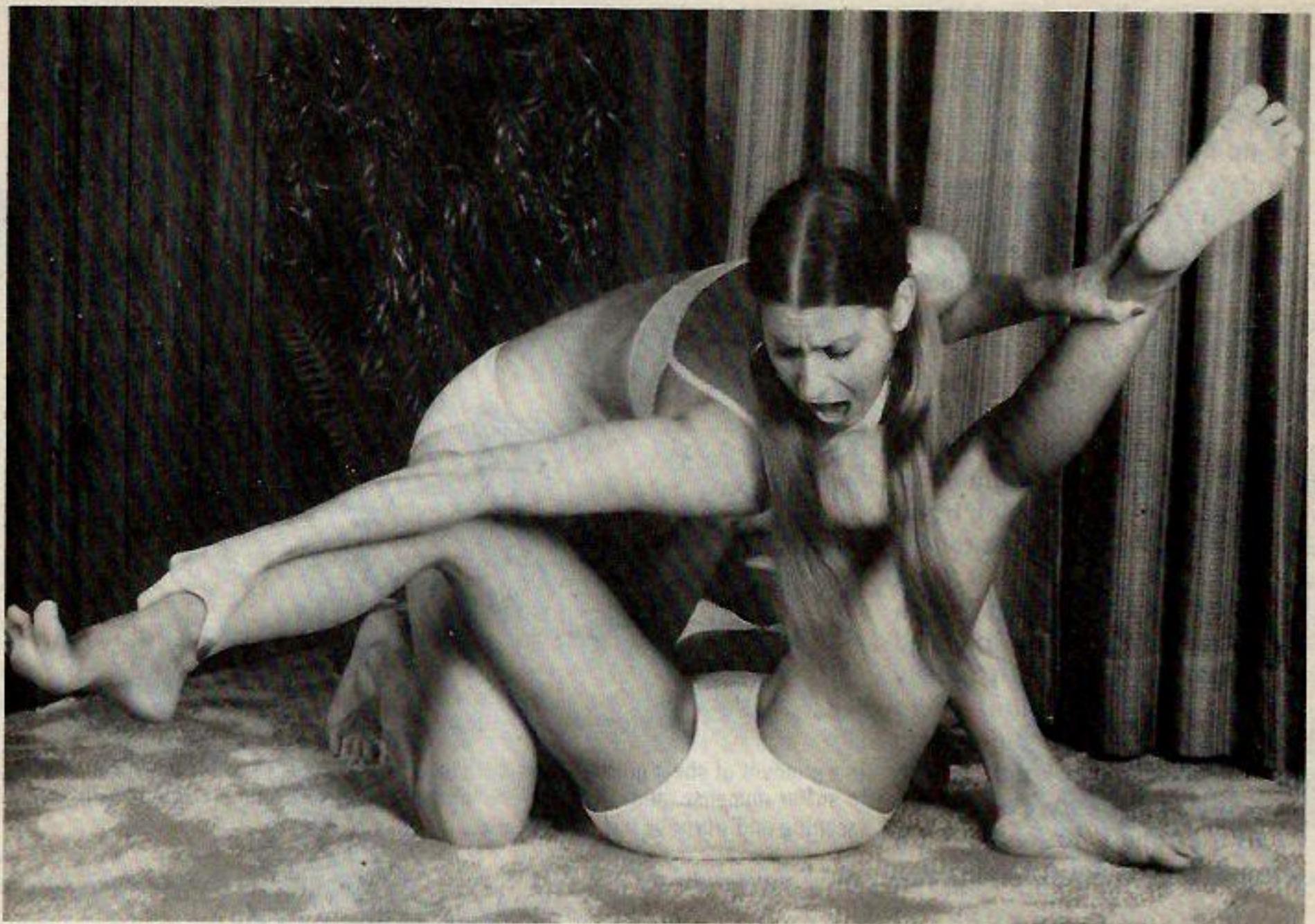
confession to abate.

When Madge had said her piece, Marlowe promised, "I'll see what I can do. Give me your phone number and I'll get back to you."

The next two days seemed like an eternity. Madge stayed by her telephone as if it were the source of life. Finally, on the evening of the second day, the phone rang. It was Marlowe.

"This is the deal," Marlowe stated, "and don't feel obligated to take it if you don't want to. We couldn't get a regular match in front of an audience; New York is enjoying the best in apartment wrestling ever. There are more great women than there are matches."

"However, I can tell you what we can do. Hester said she'd love a rematch, especially when she heard the circumstances. My friend who photographs the matches for the wrestling magazine also is interested. The



Madge forces Hester's powerful legs to crumble under her strength as she takes the advantage (above). Moments later the situation is reversed (below).



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"However, I can tell you what we can do. Hester said she'd love a rematch, especially when she heard the circumstances. My friend who photographs the matches for the wrestling magazine also is interested. The

match would be held exclusively for the photos. Models tell me the camera's eye is much more powerful than stares from a thousand men. Plus, you'll be able to know this match will be seen by the readers, who number in the millions."

"I'll take it. When can you arrange it."

"You're sure this will be okay?"

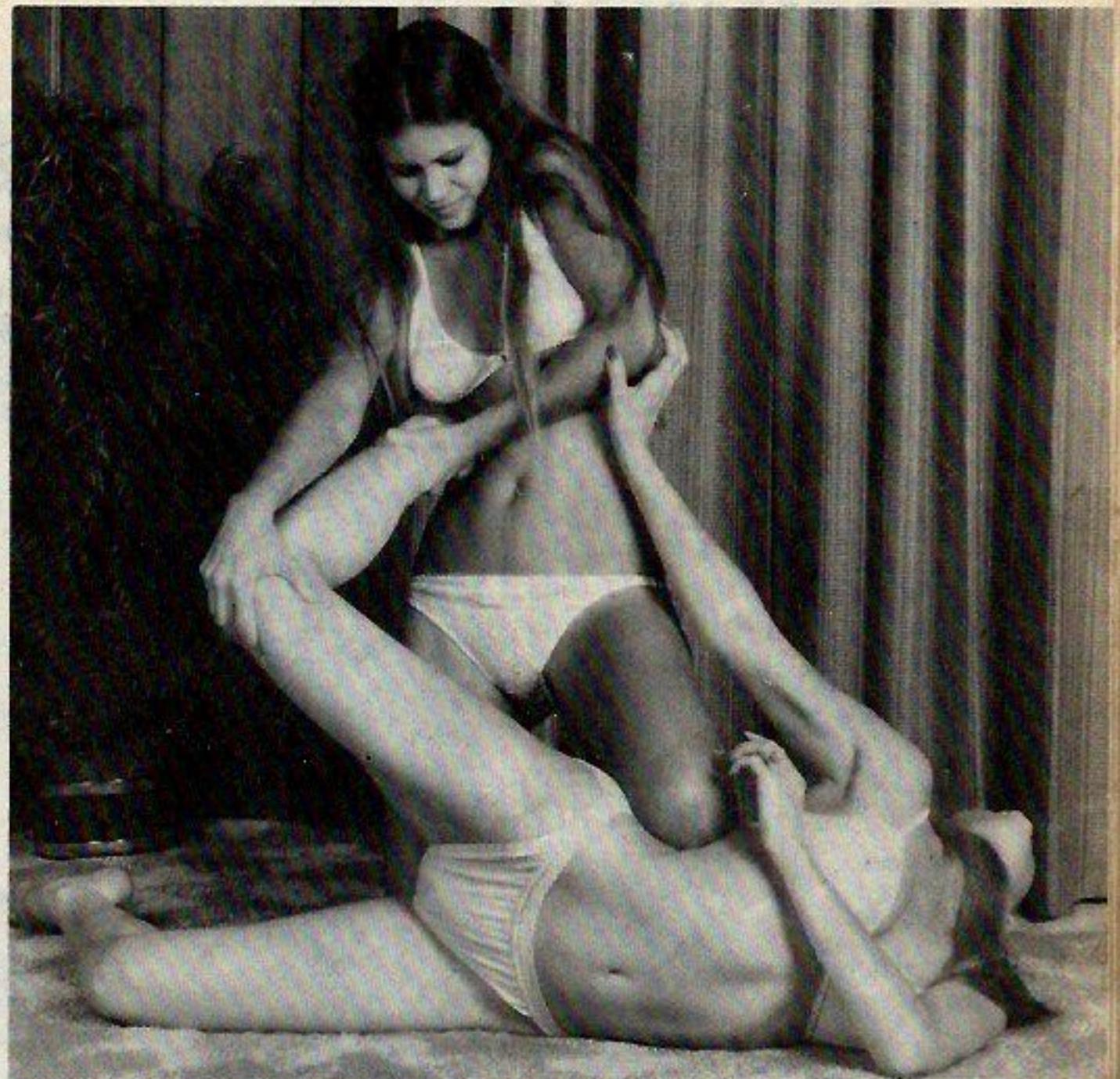
"Yes. It's the best I can get."

And so, Madge found herself on American Airlines flight 566 from Cleveland to New York. The book of poetry lay on her lap. The tears were quickly wiped away. This was no time for reflection. There was a world to conquer, a vision to realize, and a revelation to discover. All this would be had during a wild brawl combining beauty and violence. And only the camera's eye would see it.

Marlowe met the brunette beauty at the airport. The match was scheduled for the next afternoon. Hester was spending the day at a fashionable east side spa, getting into superb condition for the bout. Although there would be no crowd, Hester regarded every contest as if it were being held in the Astrodome. This gamin beauty is one of God's gentle creatures. She is perhaps the kindest woman to ever participate in this spectacle. Unlike the other women who frequent the sport, Hester isn't interested in the power of domination, the cruel delight in watching a helpless beauty writhe in agony. For this exquisite athlete, wrestling is a physical celebration. Watching her is like seeing Reggie Jackson swing a bat or Billie Jean King hit a tennis ball. Wrestling is what Hester was meant to do.

The reason she took this match was because of the strange challenge it presented. Here was a woman, desperately searching for something she's

(Continued on page 48)



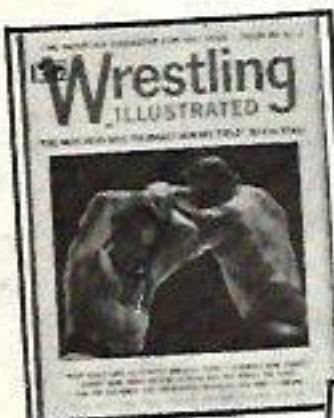
Planting her knee in the small of Hester's back, Madge tries to rip off her adversary's leg (above). Madge tries to pin Hester's shoulders (below), but the effort is to little avail. Hester is too good to be stopped so early in a match.



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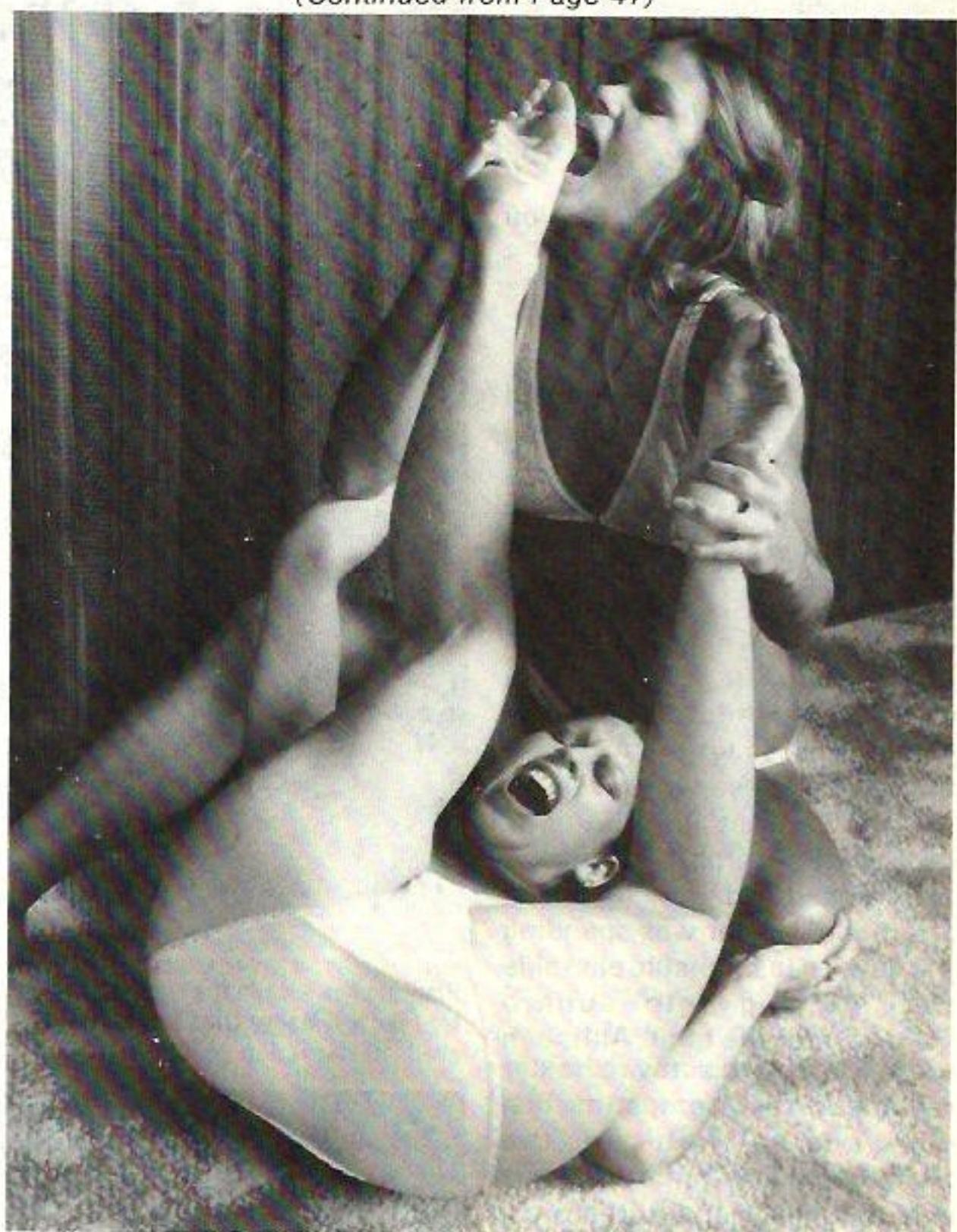
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APARTMENT WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 47)



In a moment of rage, Hester prepares to bite Madge's foot (above). Madge is caught in a powerlock by Hester (below left). When Madge turns things around, she pays Hester back for biting her foot (below right).



never found, hoping to reach the pinnacle of her life during an apartment wrestling match. The battle will be held strictly for a magazine. Would that change anything? Does a crowd get the adrenalin to flow quicker? Wrestling for the silent, impartial eye of the camera would answer many questions Hester had about herself.

The two women finally met on a blustery afternoon, the temperature barely sneaking into two figures. Hester and Madge were probably the only two women in New York wearing bikinis. Fortunately, the penthouse was well heated and had a working fireplace. Marlowe had a roaring blaze going when the two women entered the living room.

Madge was the center of attention. There was a wild look in her eye that both fascinated and terrified. She wasn't conscious of the others in the room, only the strange voices screeching in her head. The photographer made his final adjustments. Hester did her last kneebends to loosen up. Then Marlowe announced, "Ladies, wrestle!"

As if at the mercy of some demented puppet master, Madge jerked toward Hester, arms flailing uncontrollably. The intended victim easily sidestepped this reckless rush, her delicate features betraying confusion. Madge's face was contorted in a wild, maddened expression.

The two women were now at opposite sides of the room. Madge took a deep breath, hoping to get herself under a minimum of control. Hester stalked cautiously toward her. Then, Hester leaped magnificently toward her foe, the lines of her beautiful body tensed for action. Madge tumbled backwards as her thighs felt the

(Continued on page 50)

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APARTMENT WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 49)



Toward the final stages of the match, it is Madge who dominates the action, proving she had improved since the first time she wrestled. But Hester will make one final effort before she decides to stop the match of her own volition.

full weight of Hester's shoulders.

Hester moved with lightning grace. With one hand she grabbed Madge's leg. The other hand captured her victim's wrist. She brought the two limbs back, bending Madge in half in the wrong direction. The victim writhed with all her might, jerking wildly, hoping to break the hold. Each movement was agony, moans and grunts filling the air. But she had to escape. Finally, Madge did.

After breaking the hold, the blonde rolled to safety. She sprung quickly to her feet. Hester was already standing. Madge snarled, emitting sounds horrifyingly primitive. Before anyone knew what had happened, she had bounded across the room and hoisted Hester high in the air. With a mighty heave, she threw the startled blonde halfway across the room.

Hester was too astonished to break her fall. The lovely

combatant crashed heavily on her shoulder. A sharp cry revealed her pain. The sound seemed to spark something in Madge's brain, for the tormentor's entire body seemed to become taller, stronger, almost majestic. This woman was possessed by the soul of an Amazon.

With panther grace, Madge leaped on her foe. Hester tried to squirm away, but she wasn't fast enough. Madge's foot lashed out, pounding the fallen foe in her side. Hester's body jerked as if it had been shot. Madge kicked again. Now both women were lying on the floor.

On the second kick, Hester's great skill had come into play. She had caught the heel of Madge's foot, and pushed it quickly to the side. The force of the kick did the rest, toppling Madge over. Hester now had the choice of giving herself a moment's breather or attacking. Hester attacked.

Although the pain in the side and shoulder were obvious in her stilted moves, Hester was still a magnificent animal of combat. Leaping to her feet, she grabbed Madge's ankles and pulled up. Madge had been lying on her belly. Hester's body was extended to its fullest as she yanked at her foe. Madge flipped in the air, crashing hard on her back. A move this difficult took strength and co-ordination. Hester, even with throbbing shoulders and aching ribs, had what it takes.

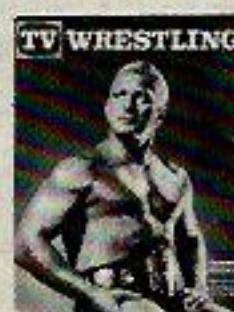
Madge tried to shake the pain from her body. Her legs kicked out, catching Hester at the knee. The superb beauty toppled to the carpet. The two battlers clutched together in an abominable embrace. Fingers and knees tore and dug into unprotected flesh. The action was barely perceptible to the naked eye. Only the grunts and spasmodic

(Continued on page 52)

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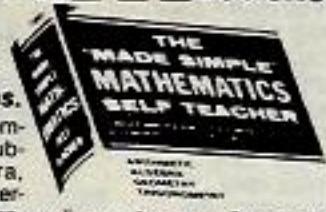
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APARTMENT WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 51)

jerking of bodies told of their furious in-fighting.

Slowly but surely, the nature of the struggle changed. Madge was on the defensive; her short, jerky movements grew desperate. Hester, sensing her foe was weakening, tried to end the match then. Impatience for victory almost cost Hester the match.

Hester broke the embrace and tried for a pin. However, as her arm reached across Madge's torso, it slid wildly across the slick, sweating body. Losing her grip, Hester's head slipped forward. The side of her face slammed into Madge's forehead. Hester was almost knocked senseless.

Madge wasn't too weakened to take advantage of the situation. While Hester was still dizzy, Madge grabbed her legs and bent them forward over Hester's body. Doubled over, the semi-conscious blonde could barely move.

Yet, the pain acted like a splash of cold water. It revived the instinct of combat in Hester. With a convulsive whip of her body, she sent Madge flying. It wasn't until the two women were separated that teeth marks were visible on Hester's thigh. Madge's fury knew no limits.

Perhaps it was the bite that infuriated Hester. A woman who has never before lost her temper went berserk. For almost a minute, a battling whirlwind overwhelmed Madge. It was a superb exhibition of wrestling virtuosity. It was also one of the most ferocious assaults ever witnessed.

Madge's head was being crushed in a bear hug, spittle running down the beauty's chin as she gasped for air, when Hester suddenly released the hold. The victim collapsed to the



Madge splits Hester's legs apart (above) but pays for it when Hester comes up with a painful hold of her own (below).



carpet as Hester stood trembling, awed by the hatred and violence released in those long, unforgettable seconds.

She stood terrified of what she had been. Madge lay on the

floor, her voluptuous body moving at the mercy of her pain. Hester could have vanquished her victim at any time. Instead, the blonde beauty stood paralyzed, afraid of what might happen if she moved.

Madge finally controlled her movements toward some goal. Slowly, but with purpose, she crawled toward her stunned tormentor. With all her strength, she threw her arms around Hester's legs. Hester could have easily broken the hold, but she just stood there. Madge grabbed at the legs, trying to topple over her foe. Hester didn't resist.

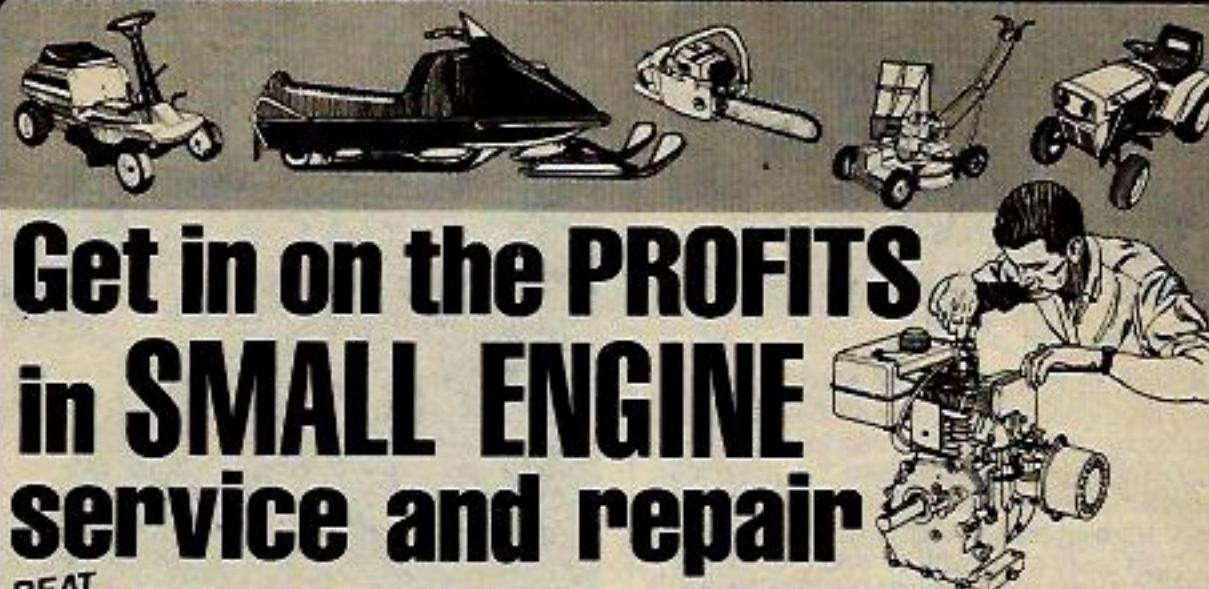
Hester lay on the carpet, trembling with fear, not of Madge but of herself. She didn't move as Madge slowly crawled up her body, finally collapsing on top of her stunned victim. In three seconds, the match was over.

Madge slowly got up. She had won. Yet, there was none of the thrill she'd hoped to have. Perhaps some of it had to do with Hester's surrender. Perhaps the absence of an audience took away some of the glory, although the imagined millions who will read of it should be enough for any woman's ego. What she missed was the delight Hester gets from the combat itself. The pursuit must be for the goal, not for the glory itself. Madge wanted glory, but didn't care about anything enough to earn it.

On the plane going back to Ohio, Madge read the last stanza of the poem. It reminded her of the difference between Hester and herself.

*I remember in the quiet
In the darkness and alone.
She is laughing as the
sunlight swears she's free,
And scared for as peaceful as
a cripple in a home.
I must have been what I was
meant to be.*

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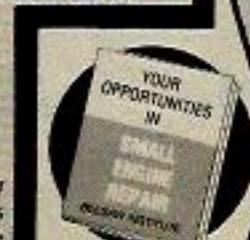


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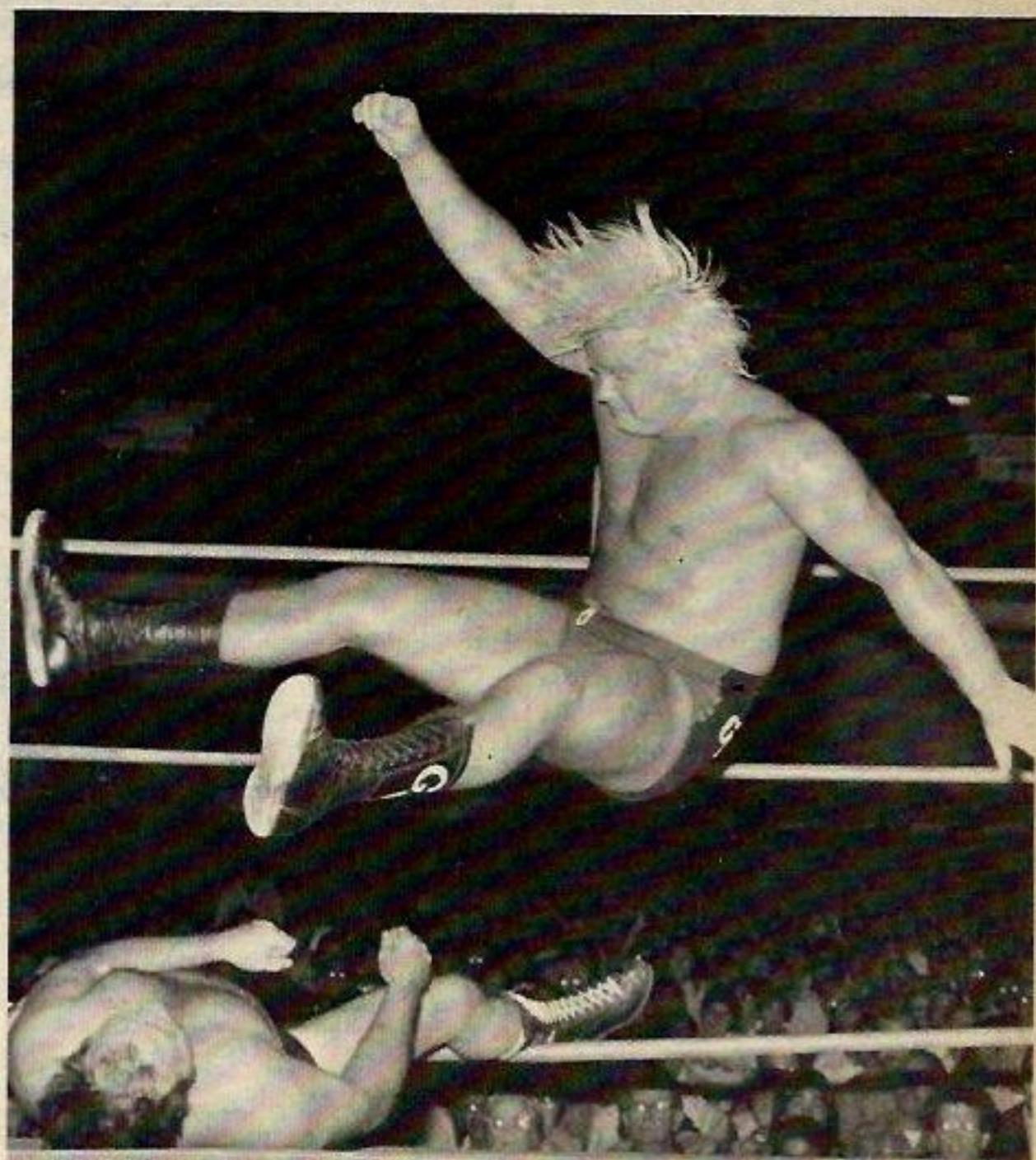
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BREAK INTO WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 12)



"I think getting a job in a wrestling arena is essential. I don't care if it's pushing a broom or selling programs. You have to get into the arena and make friends."

—Greg Valentine

even the same solar system, for that matter.

In the interests of informing our fans about the often difficult paths young wrestlers encounter in breaking into the sport, we decided to hold a seminar, an exchange of ideas and concepts,

a sharing of experiences, in the hope that something constructive, that's constructive, not destructive, would emerge.

"I'm glad you invited me to this seminar," Captain Lou Albano said as he thoughtfully stroked his beard. "This way something intelligent will be said."

"I'm very honored to be here," Verne Gagne said.

"So am I," Dusty Rhodes smiled. "I enjoy sharing my knowledge with others."

Superstar Billy Graham and Greg Valentine nodded agreeably.

When we invited these men, we knew that the hostility had to be held to a minimum. Inviting Graham and Rhodes to the same place is dangerous, and Albano and Gagne have no great love for each other either. But every individual promised to behave themselves and devote the afternoon to information and not insults.

"It was a lot easier to break into wrestling when I started," Dusty said. "There seemed to be more opportunities for us to strut our stuff. Now that wrestling popularity has gone through the roof, more and more kids want to become professional wrestlers. The competition is very stiff."

Exactly the reason for the seminar. How to overcome this increasing competition?

"I think just being a fan helps," Graham said. "By watching the wrestlers' moves and being familiar with the entire sport, you have a great foundation to work with. I'd suggest studying wrestlers very closely and going to as many matches as you possibly can."

"Definitely," Valentine agreed. "More so, I think getting a job in a wrestling arena is essential. I don't care if it's

(Continued on page 56)

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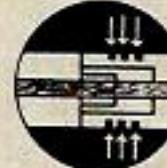
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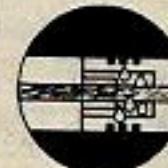
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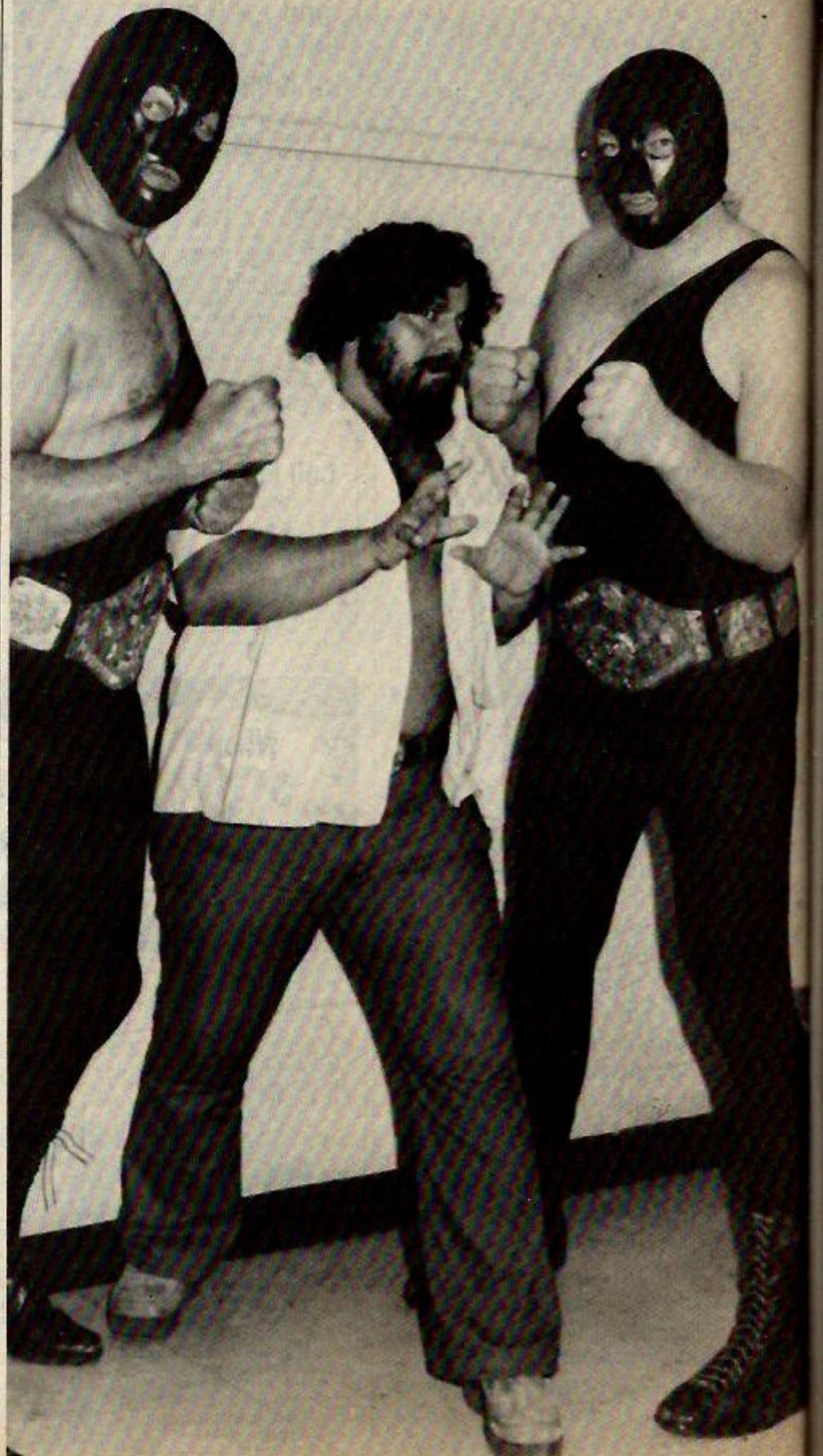
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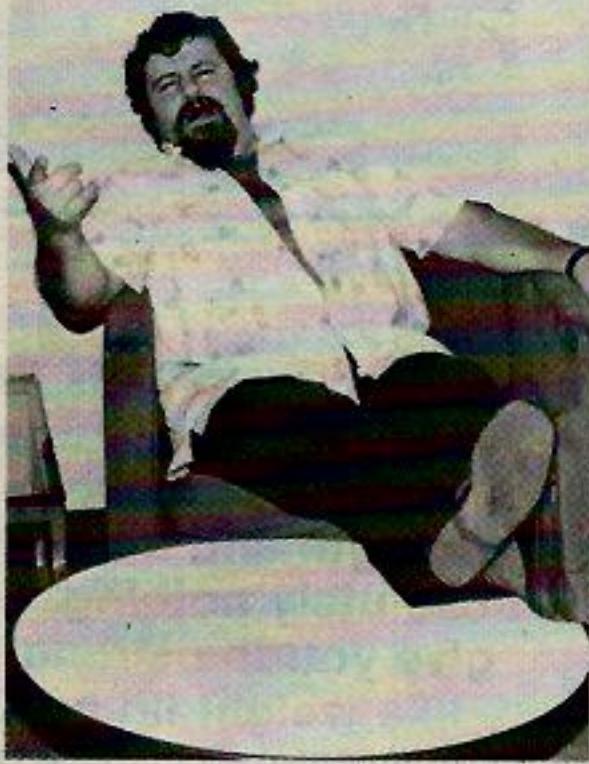
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BREAK INTO WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 55)



pushing a broom or selling programs. You have to get into the arena and make friends with people. This will also give you a chance to see the wrestlers in person, and most of the guys will always answer questions and give out pointers. There's always a couple of stinkers who won't, but wrestlers like to help young guys. By getting a job in the arena you are close to the action and will get yourself known to the right people."



"I would say a manager is the perfect route. You'll keep getting a lot of crap information about this way and that way from a lot of dumb fools. What you need is a wise man guiding you and making you a champ."

Captain Lou Albano

"Very true," Rhodes said. "You'll only be pounding your skull against a steel wall if you try and go in cold. I think that the best thing for a wrestler is to get in as many amateur matches as you can, whether on the school team or even at the club level.

(Continued on page 58)

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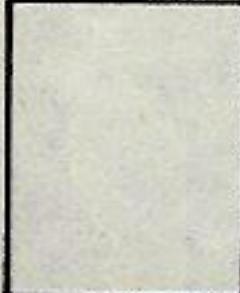
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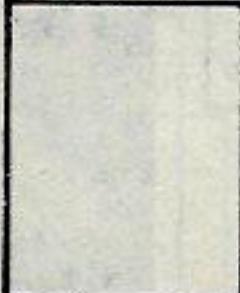
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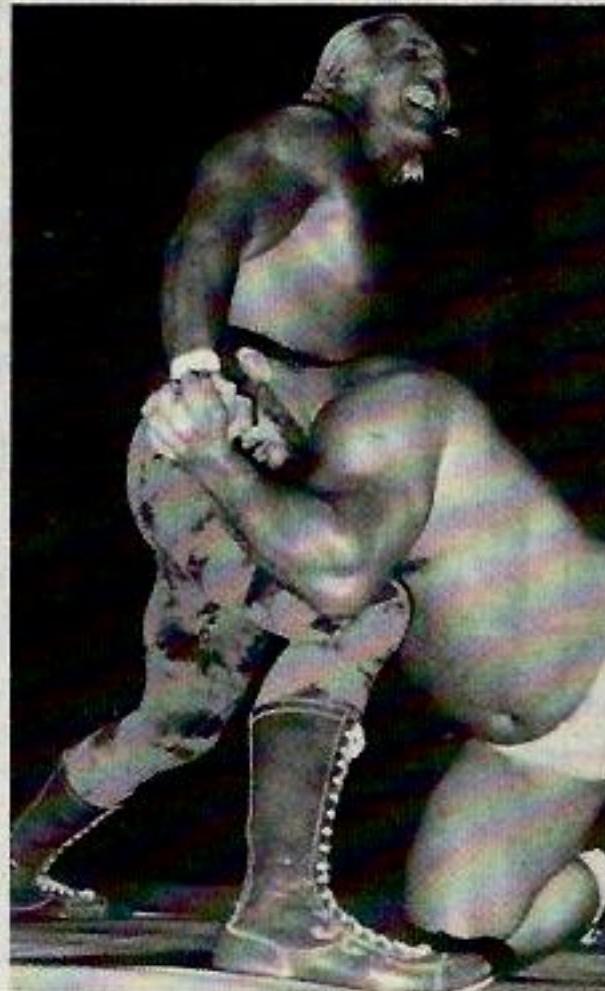
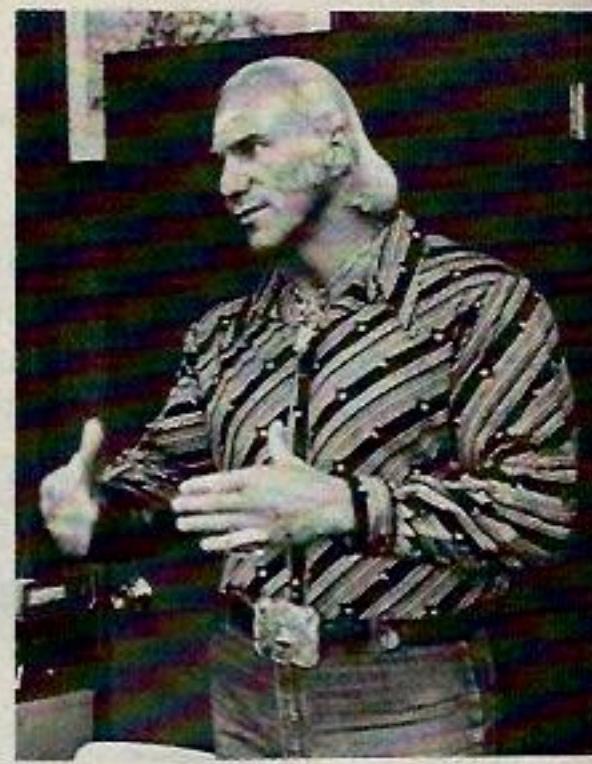
BREAK INTO WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 57)

You can't go to a promoter and ask him to set you up unless you can show a lot of experience. That and exercising are the best suggestions I can make."

Our world-famous expert on body-building eagerly offered his opinions.

"Lifting weights is the best exercise in the world," Graham said. "You need your strength and nothing, absolutely nothing, will give you the strength like weight lifting. But you should



"Lifting weights is the best exercise in the world. You need strength and nothing, absolutely nothing, will give you the strength like weight lifting."

—Superstar Billy Graham

buy any one of the top books on the sport and carefully follow the instructions so you don't hurt yourself. I do think a set of weights is a wise investment for any rookie wrestler."

"If I may politely disagree with my esteemed colleague," Dusty said sarcastically. They exchanged ugly looks but refrained from any physical violence. "I'm a great believer in isometrics. I think weight lifting is good only up to a point.

Improving muscle tone is very important so you don't lose your agility and become muscle-bound. Doing both sort of exercises, as well as gymnastic exercises, is a great all-around program."

"There are various wrestling camps around the country where youngsters can go to improve their skills," Gagne said. "These camps are very good because the students learn under the coaching of experienced men. This way, there's constant supervision to ensure that no one gets injured.

"Also, the students can do all the exercises and maneuvers at

(Continued on page 62)

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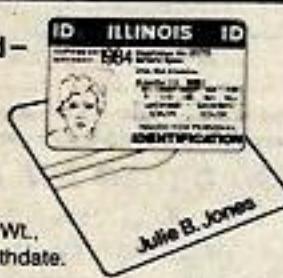
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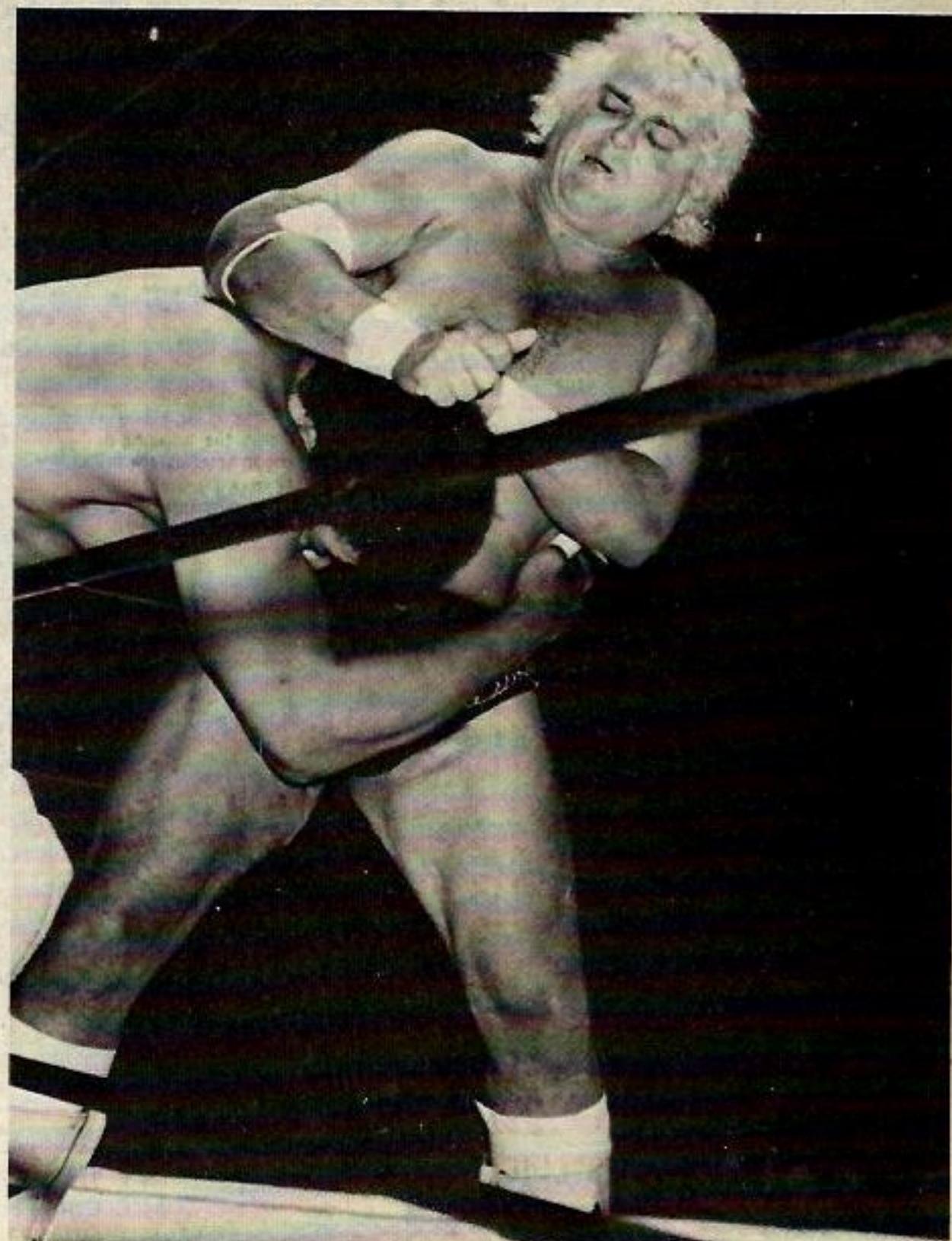
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FREE BOOK

BREAK INTO WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 58)



home. I think that's an excellent way for kids to break in and learn the correct methods of wrestling."

Once the youngster has built himself up, gotten good contacts and learned the proper moves, what then?

"I would say a manager is the perfect route," Albano said. "You'll keep getting a lot of crap information about this way and that way from a lot of dumb fools. What you need is a wise man guiding you and making

you a champ. You think these wrestlers, guys who can't even open a can of tuna by themselves, would make it to the top if they didn't have a manager telling them what to do every step of the way? Come on."

It was a demonstration of considerable self-restraint that no one punched Albano in the face. Fortunately for the seminar, his crass remarks were ignored. We asked every person to make a closing remark.

"I say work, work, work,"



"I think the best thing for a wrestler is to get in as many amateur matches as you can, whether on the school team or even at the club level."

—Dusty Rhodes

Valentine said.

"Develope your own unique personality. That'll help a lot," Rhodes said.

"Lift those weights, baby. And don't eat a lot of garbage food," Graham said.

"Watch out for the shady characters who'll try and sell you the Moon," Albano said. "Be careful who you trust. Only trust respectable people like me."

"You have to want it very badly and really want to expend the energy to make yourself a good wrestler," Verne said. "Look down deep within yourself and honestly ask yourself if you're prepared to make the necessary sacrifices. If you are, welcome aboard, because the youngsters are the lifeblood of the sport."

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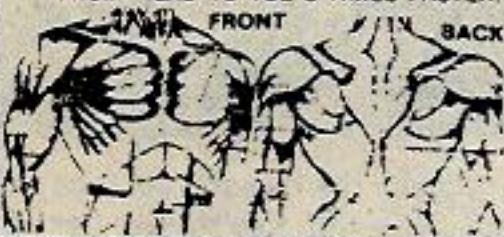
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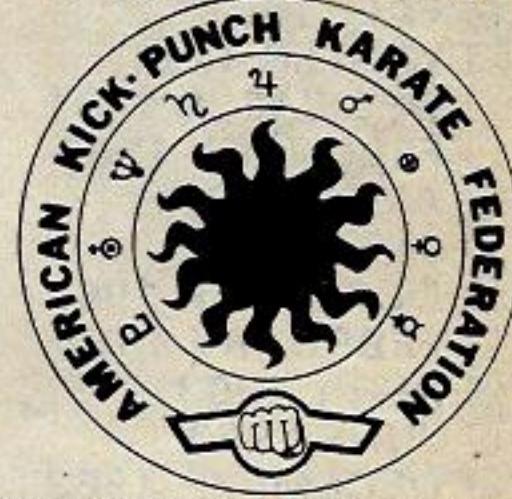
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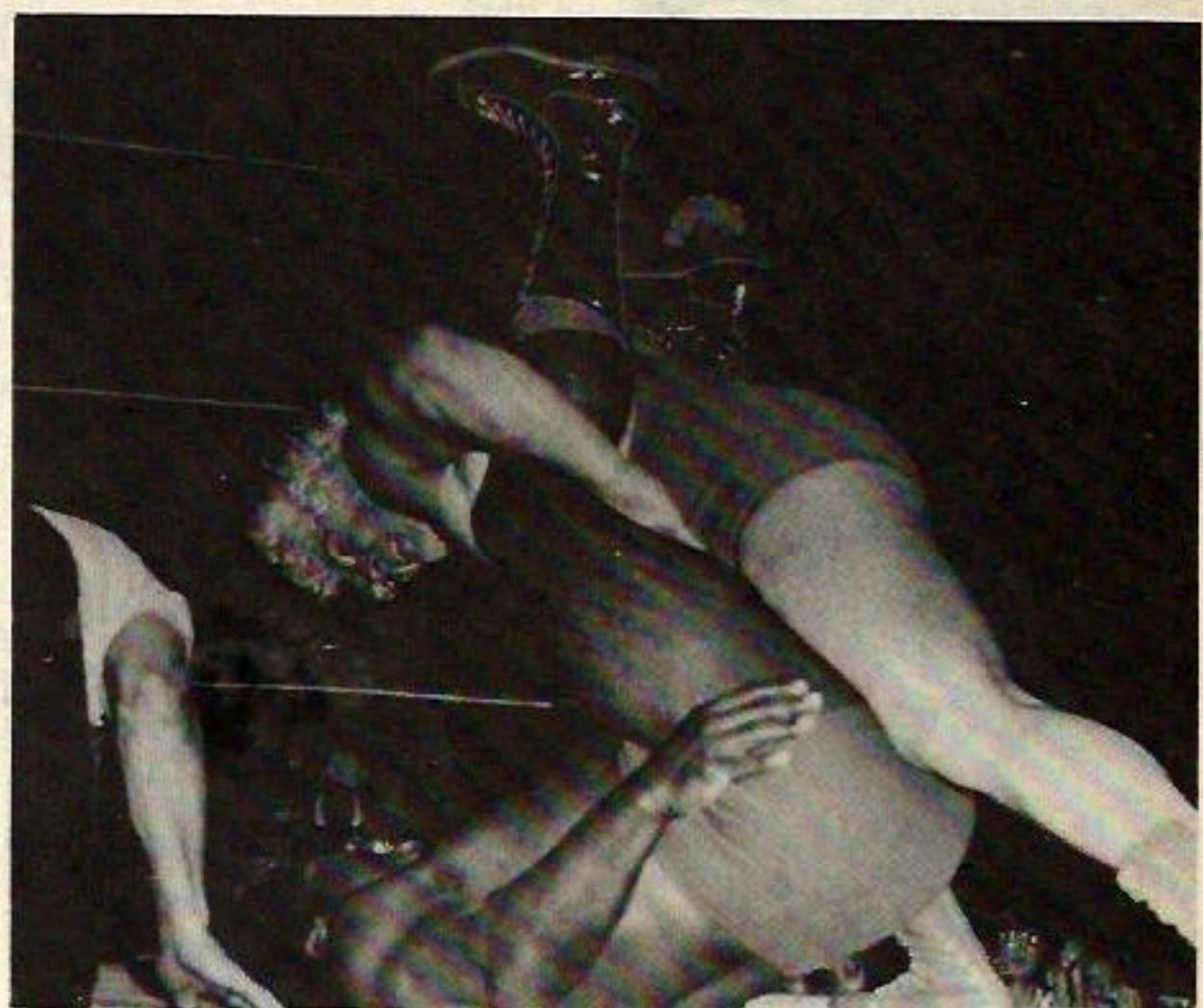
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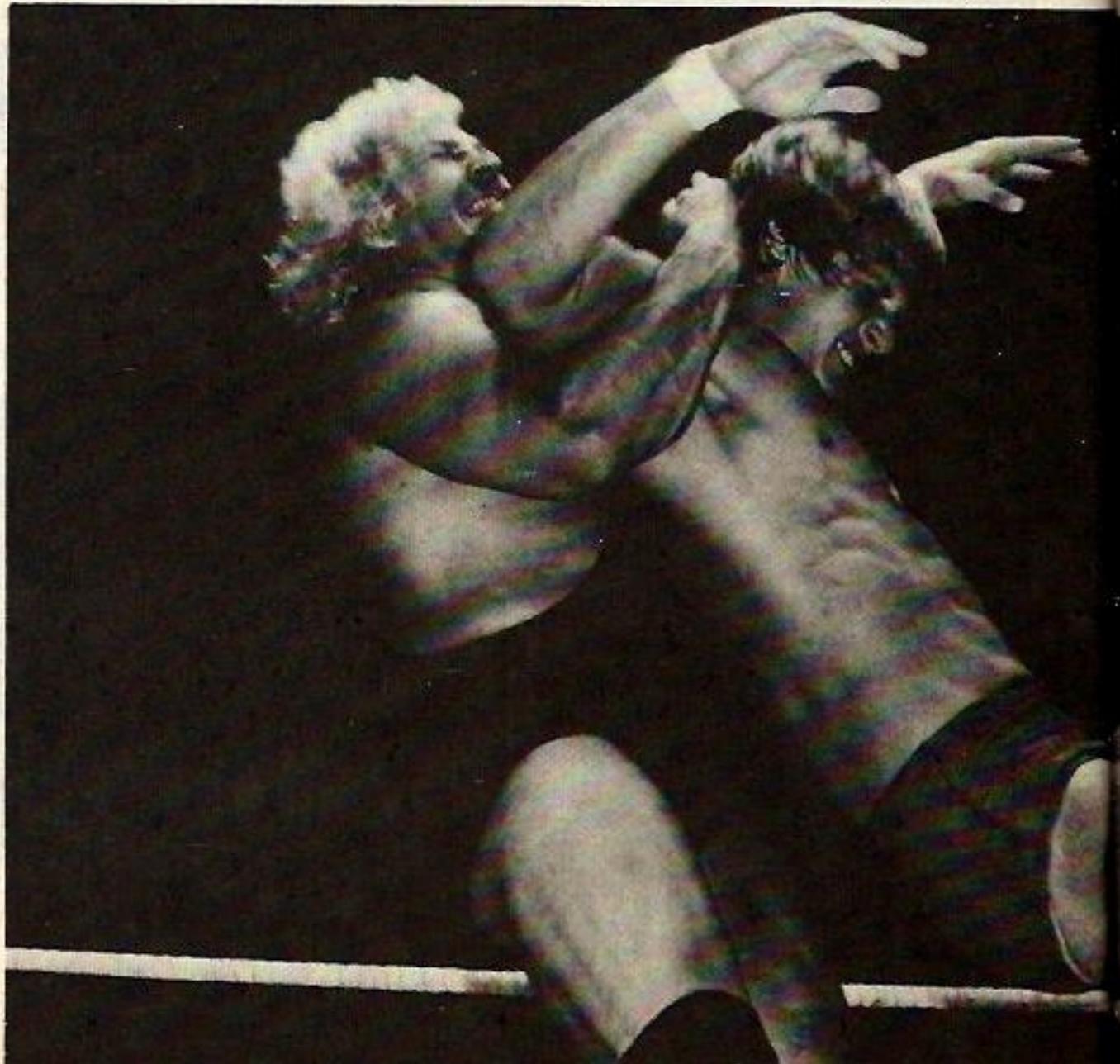
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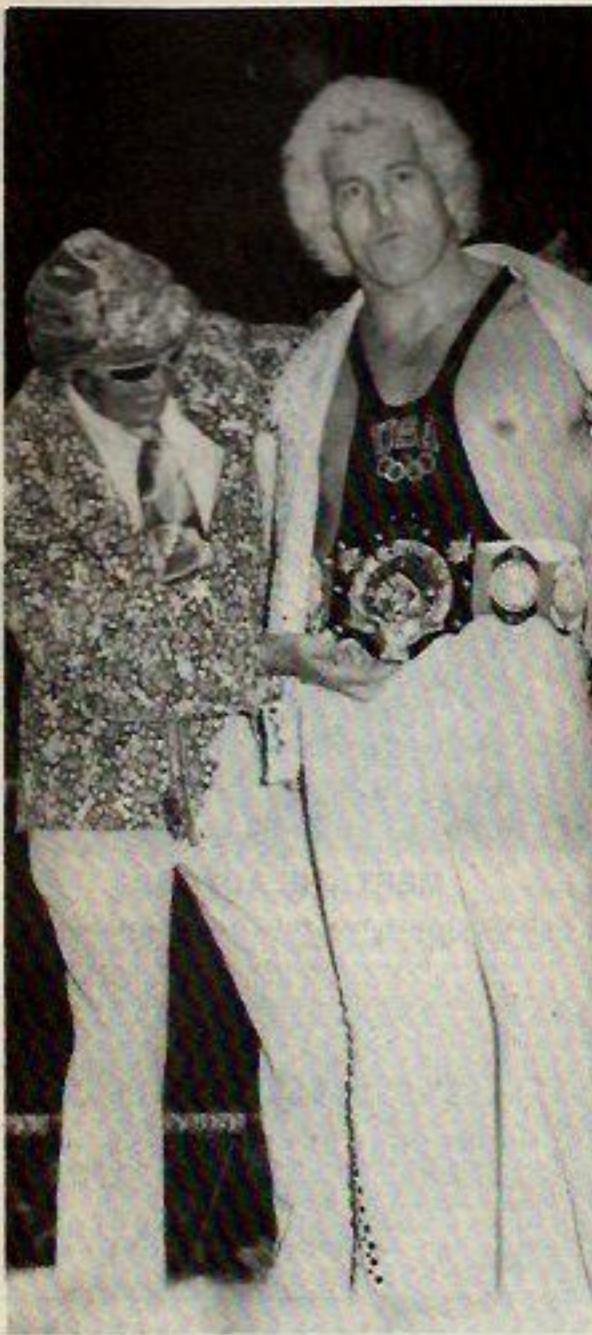
KEN PATERA

(Continued from Page 18)



Patera grabs the ropes as he tries to pin Bobo Brazil (above). Patera and the Grand Wizard show off Ken's Inter-Continental belt (opposite right). Patera uses the swinging neckbreaker to take the Missouri title from Kevin Von Erich (below).





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